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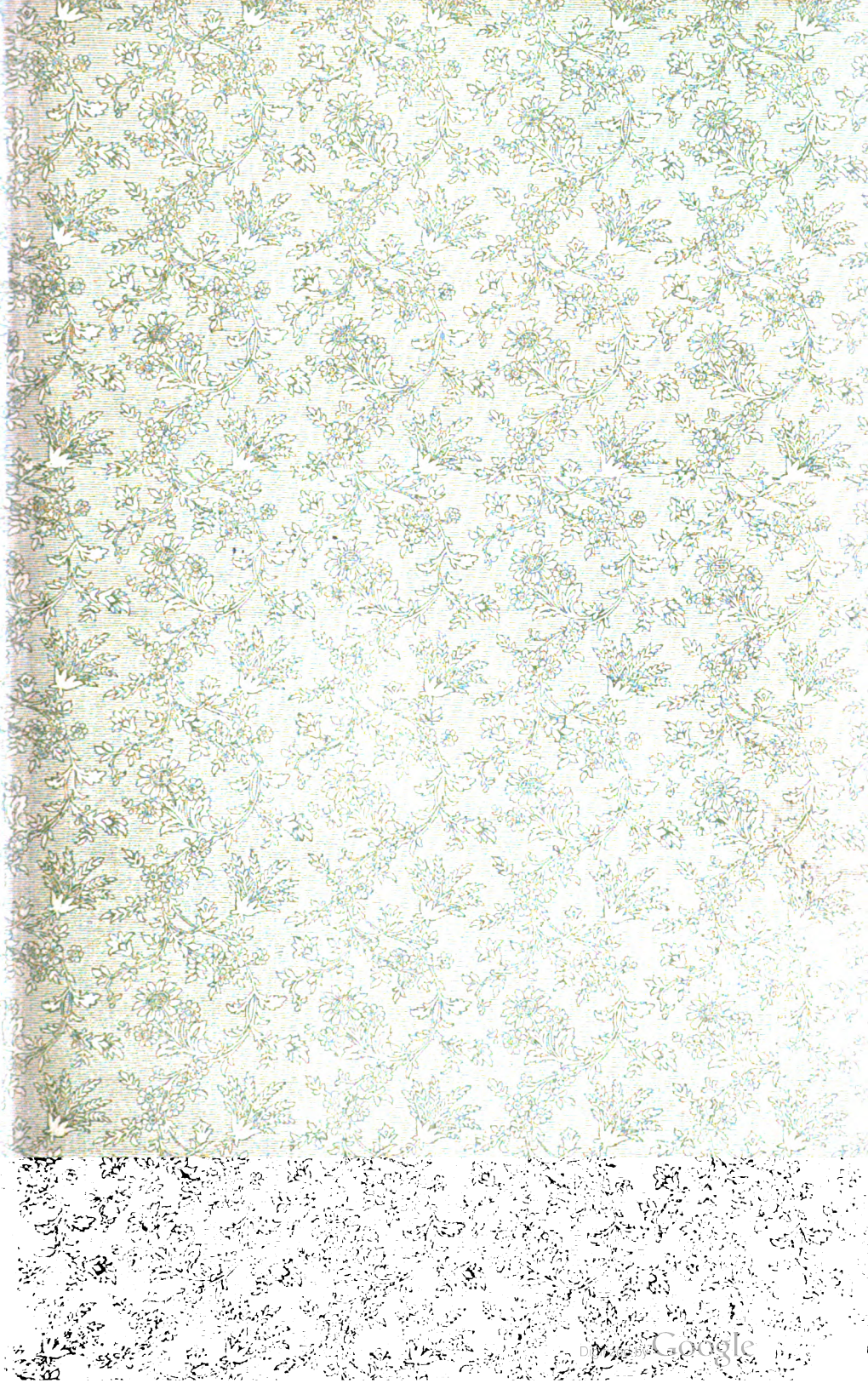
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A MÉSALLIANCE
IN THE
HOUSE OF BRUNSWICK

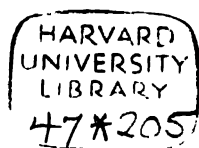
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P R E F A C E

THE story of Eléonore d'Olbreuze is well known. During the time that she was Maid of Honour to the Princess of Tarente Miss d'Olbreuze met in Germany and in Holland Duke Georges Guillaume of Brunswick, who fell in love with her, and eventually married her. They had a daughter, viz : Sophie-Dorothée of Brunswick, who was married at the age of sixteen to her first cousin, Duke George of Hanover, who afterwards became King of England. It was a most unhappy marriage. During the night of the 1st July 1694 the Count of Kœnigsmarck was assassinated in the castle belonging to the House of Hanover, and Sophie-Dorothée, being

declared guilty, was imprisoned in the fortress d'Ahldeu, where she died after thirty-two years of captivity.

This is well known throughout the world, and numberless romances have been written about it. Now, unfortunately all these writings are only romances. Whether the writers were badly informed, or whether their scruples as to veracity disappeared in their wish to excite curiosity at any price, the authors who have written about Eléonore d'Olbreuze and her daughter, were, as a rule, inspired by sources devoid of historical value, often taking their information from 'Memoirs' since then known to be apocryphal.

We believe that the memory of these two women who were both the playthings of a strange destiny, both often cruelly slandered, and both so dignified in misfortune, deserves a better record than the whimsical descriptions of which, until now, they have been the object.

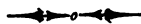
The Court of Zell in which they lived, was a French colony in the middle of Germany, bordering on Hanover, and was in the seventeenth century the centre of so many intrigues, and the theatre of such tragical events, that it

seems to us worthy of being described to serve as a frame to these two women.

We have profited by a long stay in Germany to make necessary researches. As we are related to the family, we have the advantage in knowing more intimately the persons who surrounded Eléonore and her parents. Perhaps our story is incomplete. There is in these two lives a mystery that it is difficult to solve. In the meanwhile, thanks to the unpublished documents which we have consulted at the Ministry des Affaires Etrangères in Paris, to the library of l'Université Suédoise de Lund, and to the records d'Etat of Berlin, of Wolfenbüttel, and of Hanover ; assisted, moreover, by the remarkable travels recently published by the two *savants* MM. Schaumann, archivist, and Dr Adolphe Kœcher, we believe we have collected sufficient facts on which to base this history. Several local chronological manuscripts, belonging to the reformed Church of Zell, memoirs relating to the German Court in the seventeenth century, the correspondence of Leibnitz and the Electress Sophie, of the Duchess d'Orléans and of the Feuquières, have also supplied us with useful information. We have, we think,

written a book which may not be so attractive to those fond of romances as what has already been handed down regarding these two princesses ; but at all events we have this advantage over our predecessors, that what we have related is strictly in conformance with the truth.

A MÉSALLIANCE



CHAPTER I

ELÉONORE D'OLBREUZE

ELÉONORE DESMIER D'OLBREUZE was born in the Château d'Olbreuze, near Usseau, between Niort and Rochelle, on the 3rd January 1639. She was the daughter of Alexandre Desmier, knight, and Lord of Olbreuze and Jacquette Poussard de Vandr .

The important position which she and her illustrious descendants held in the seventeenth century has often attracted the attention of historians in France, England, and, above all, in Germany. Not familiar with the names of fiefs, which had their origin in France in different members of

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the same family, and which render historical researches in this country so difficult; deceived also by the scandalous stories written by certain persons about the Duchess de Zell, in which consideration for the family made them from the beginning her declared enemies; the great proportion of the authors who have written about her in Germany have misrepresented her parentage. We, therefore, went to Lunebourg, and in an old manuscript written by a modest and long forgotten savant, we found a chronological sketch of the family from which she came, and as there have been so many ignorant and disparaging accounts of it, we think it wise to describe a little more fully the ancestors of Mdle. d'Olbreuze.

In Poitou, perhaps more than any other province in France, there were at this time a great number of powerful nobles possessing hereditary titles; but they preferred keeping the sobriquets or surnames under which they had made themselves known, to adopting the names of fiefs which they held; amongst them were the Desmier. Of knightly origin they traced their descendants from the earliest periods in the history of Poitou. They were not rich like the powerful Viscount de Thouars, or the

Count de la Marche, and, although they had rendered at different times brilliant services in the army, they had not distinguished themselves by heroic deeds likely to immortalise their names, but they held their own amongst the highest nobles in the western provinces of France.

The founder of the house was Foucalt Desmier, lord of l'Obroire, in 1082. His descendants acquired considerable possessions in Poitou and in all the neighbouring places in Angoumois, in Saintonge, and in Aunis. They were allied by marriage to the principal families in these provinces. We will not enter into the genealogical details of the history of all the various branches of the family, but content ourselves with saying there are two families still living, viz: Chenon and d'Archiac, who trace their descent from the lord de l'Obroire.

The Desmier were always soldiers. In the fourteenth century they were amongst the Poitevine nobles who, with Sire de Pons and Maréchal de Sancerre, directed the expulsion of the English, then masters of Poitou. In the fifteenth century several were governors of fortresses in places where they lived. On the accession of the house of Valois to the throne of France fortune smiled

on them still more generously. François I had spent his youth at Cognac. The Desmier like the other nobles in these provinces were attached to the Court. One finds from then their names at the head of the detachments of soldiers who, until the end of the reign of Louis XIII, formed the basis of the French army. They fought in Italy, in Germany, and in the different provinces of France during the religious troubles. Several were governors of places. One was at court during the reign of Catherine de Médicis, another took holy orders and became chaplain to the King, and to the Parliament of Paris, and 'maitre des requêtes ordinaire' of the Dauphin. Charles - César Desmier de Chenon occupied the post of Lieutenant-Général de la Sénéchaussée d'Angoumois. In 1651 François-Alexandre Desmier, Lord of Saint-Simon, married Marie d'Archiac, the last descendant of one of the most illustrious families of Saintonge, whose name he took. His sons, his grandsons, and his great grandsons, became lieutenant-generals or major-generals, and a cavalry regiment bears their name.

A younger branch separated in the fifteenth century from the head of the family, and the

d'Olbreuze branch during the Reformation joined the Protestants. Several other members of the family embraced the same faith. Louis Desmier, Lord of Chenon, one of the faithful followers of Henry IV was also a Protestant, and he refused to follow this prince after his conversion. In vain Henry insisted that he should remain with him instead of returning to Angoumois. The Lord of Chenon retired to his estate, and for some time nothing would induce him to leave it, but after hesitating for years he eventually seceded also. Alone the family d'Olbreuze remained staunch Protestants. Olbreuze is situated not far from Rochelle, in the middle of that region so cruelly devastated by the war. The great-grandfather of Eléonore had his castle pillaged and burnt. His grandfather a lieutenant-general in the Protestant army commanded by Soubise, perished with his son in an ambuscade. Eléonore's father in spite of all his misfortunes was a strict Protestant, and his children were brought up in that creed. His fortunes suffered for it perhaps, but those of his sons who did marry made advantageous alliances.

Eléonore's mother, Jacquette Poussard de Vandr  was as well-connected as the Desmier.

She belonged to a good old Poitevine family, who had since the fourteenth century held high offices in the province. When Eléonore was born her mother's cousins, the Poussards du Vigean, were great favourites at the Court, and she was also related to the Duchess de Richlieu.

If one looks still further into the ancestry of Eléonore one finds still more celebrated personages, viz: Saint-Gelays - Lusignan, Parthenay-Soubise, Archiac, Vivonne, and from the ancient reigning house of Lousignan, as well as the Comtes Souverain de la Marche, the Counts d'Angoulême, des Courtenay, d'Anjou, the Viscount de Thouars, and the Duke d'Aquitaine. The descendants of these several houses intermarried with the ancestors of Mdle. d'Olbreuze.

A German genealogist, M. de Grieffencranz, who was a contemporary of Eléonore went to France to study the family history of the Duchess de Zell. On his return to Germany he gave Leibnitz, the historian of the house of Guelph, a genealogy in which Eléonore is descended on her mother's side in a direct line from Charlemagne. These ancestors of the Duchess were powerful vassals, and nearly allied to the kings of France; they occupied such an important

place in history that Leibnitz thought the descent very probably correct.

M. de Grieffencranz, who was very celebrated for his genealogical researches, particularly those concerning illustrious French families, sent me specimens of proofs which shew plainly that amongst the ancestors of the Duchess were kings and sovereigns, and it is very clear in these proofs that Alix de Courtenay, wife of d'Aymar, Count d'Angoulême, and grand-daughter of a king of France, was one of her ancestors.

The Duchess d'Orléans, in a letter to her parents, remarked, 'The Duchess is of very low origin. It would have been a suitable match had she married Colin, the premier valet de chambre of Monsieur.' This remark, which was considered very witty, was repeated in every court in Europe, and has since then been published in the '*Correspondence de Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans*' by Ernest Joëgle; unfortunately people not troubling to inquire into the subject believed it. That we did not intend to prove Eléonore d'Olbreuze the Duke of Brunswick's equal by birth, our title of this work plainly shews. We can understand how in a certain measure the Duchess Sophie was not

flattered at having *Eléonore* for a sister-in-law; and the Duchess d'Orléans, who was then smarting from the affront she received through her son who had just announced his marriage with *Mdlle. de Blois* (a natural daughter of Louis XIV), felt humiliated at the events which marked the entrance of *Mdlle. d'Olbreuze* into the family. Thus it is easily explained that the wounded pride of the Palatine prompted calumny and falsehood in this as in several other instances.

Little is known concerning the early days of *Eléonore*. In all probability, they were passed quietly at *Olbreuze*, surrounded by the love and protection of her parents, and accompanied by the consideration and respect due to her family. The anonymous historian who has left us a short account of the life of *Eléonore*, gives few particulars respecting her early youth. She was tenderly beloved by both her parents, who, seeing that she possessed brilliant personal attractions, took the greatest care to give her an excellent education, flattering themselves that with her beauty and wit, she would obtain every success in life.

As the child developed into a woman, she quite realised the promise she had shewn in her youth. Her figure was tall and slender, she

carried herself gracefully; she had large expressive eyes, a well-shaped face, a good nose, small mouth, and exceedingly white teeth; her hair was black, and her complexion delicately fair; her hands and arms were perhaps a trifle too long, but they were white and shapely. Her manner was gay and winsome, like all young people she indulged sometimes in a little playful badinage, but when in a serious mood she was equally charming. Her bright intelligent mind was of greater service to her on her introduction into the world than her personal attractions. She was fond of conversation, and she was complimented by intellectual people who listened to her with pleasure when she spoke—she always expressed herself so well. It was the fashion for French ladies to jest, but she did it so delicately that she never offended her companions; and when her jests were directed to one of the opposite sex, she shewed so much tact and good sense that her raillery seemed to serve as a pretext to correct them of their faults: in a word, she was so gay and light-hearted that serious and melancholy persons could not resist her good humour. She loved dancing, and none of her acquaintances surpassed her in this accomplish-

ment. . . . Her parents saw with pleasure the amiability and attractiveness of their lovely daughter and sought a fitting opportunity to introduce her to society.

It was in this way that Eléonore was introduced to the Princesses de la Trémoille. The Eléctress Sophie and the Duchess d'Orléans have endeavoured by every means in their power to prove that Eléonore d'Olbreuze held a very inferior position with the Princess de Tarente. We have established the position of Eléonore's family in their province. Being also a native of Poitou, Charlotte Amélie de la Trémoille, the Princess de Tarente's own daughter, could not fail to know the parentage of her young protégée, and she says in her memoirs that 'Eléonore was of good family in the county of Aunis.' There can be no question as to the relationship which existed between her and the Princess, although they pretended some time later when they wanted to vilify Eléonore at any price that the connection was merely one of servant and mistress. Of course it is true that there was a considerable difference in their origin, but that difference was not insurmountable, since on her father's side Eléonore counted amongst her an-

cestors a great-grandmother, by name Saint Gelays-Lusignan, and the Princess' son married one of her descendants.

At this time the young nobles often left their homes to seek their fortunes either in the army or in the surroundings of the court. It was not an uncommon occurrence for young ladies of good birth to join the suite of a grand lady, generally related to the queen, or to some member of the royal family, endeavouring by these means to get advantageously settled for life; and this was no doubt the case in regard to Eléonore and the Princess de Tarente.

We find in the '*Mémoires de Charlotte-Amélie de la Trémoille*' that Mdle. d'Olbreuze was at first maid of honour to the Dowager Duchess de la Trémoille, and the Princess when speaking of her aunt's (Marie Charlotte de la Trémoille) marriage to Bernard de Saxe, duke de Jéna, which took place at Paris on the 18th of July 1662, adds, 'After the marriage my grandmother resolved not to go to Court or to Paris any more, but to end her days either in the province of Vitré or Thouars, so she dismissed her maids of honour; the first one, Maranville, went to Madame de Weymar, who afterwards

married M. Opel and became her lady-in-waiting ; and d'Olbreuze, the second one, came to my mother.'

The anonymous historian who wrote the life of *Eléonore d'Olbreuze* did not mention this circumstance, but said 'The Princess de Tarente having heard of the sensation *Mdlle. d'Olbreuze* excited amongst the Poitevine noblesse, became very anxious to see her, and on being introduced was heard to remark that the young lady deserved the high reputation she had acquired, in fact the Princess took such a fancy to her that she pressed her parents to allow *Eléonore* to live with her, promising them to take the greatest care of her and her interests. Her parents, who were anxious to promote the welfare of their child, accepted the offer with pleasure and gratitude.

Eléonore was a charming companion, witty, amusing, and of such unvarying good humour that the Princess became greatly attached to her and declared she could not live without her ; nothing pleased her more than seeing *Eléonore* dance some of the old Poitevine dances which she had learned in her childhood, and which she went through with much gracefulness.

When the Princess returned to Court, Eléonore accompanied her ; and she was not long established there before her wit and beauty attracted the admiration of every one who knew her.

What part she played in this brilliant French Court we cannot very clearly define, but it is certain that she did not stay there long. She was not rich, and she did not get any advantageous offers of marriage. In the frivolous society of the Court her esprit and beauty were much talked of, but her rigid virtue displeased some of her gallant admirers. The spiteful speeches with which they credit the Count de Gramont only shew that neither he nor his friends received any encouragement from her.

As the Prince and Princess de Tarente were Protestants, the King did not bestow on them the favours to which they thought themselves entitled ; consequently the Prince went to Holland, and was there promoted to high military offices. The Princess hastened to join her husband, and being greatly attached to Eléonore, one can understand that a feeling of gratitude towards her kind patroness induced the latter to accompany the Princess on her journey, and to continue her services where they were so urgently needed.

The big towns of Holland and the society which one met there at this period presented a strange aspect. Among it the most notable were the Stuarts, who driven from England, lived here for several years surrounded by their faithful adherents, and who were often visited by English noblemen who came to renew their promises of support. Here was Elizabeth Stuart the exiled widow of the Winter Kœnig (Frédéric V); and also all the dethroned princes who dreaded the vengeance of Louis XIV. Several German princes and noblemen (members of the House of Orange and Nassau), and people from far and wide took refuge in the Hague, Bois-le-Duc, and Breda. But the centre of attraction and the place where most political intrigues originated was the Hague.

In the *Mémoires* of de Gourville, who being compromised in Fouquet's disgrace fled to Holland, there is a good description of life and society at this time.

Eléonore was soon surrounded by numerous admirers, but she remained cold and indifferent to their protestations of affection. It was perhaps a presentiment of the good fortune which the future held for her that made her so proud.

CHAPTER II

THE GUELPHS—THE DUKE GEORGES-GUILLAUME, AND HIS FAMILY

‘WHEN we are tired of her at Court, she will be good enough for a German Prince.’ These words attributed to the Count de Gramont, respecting Mdlle. d’Olbreuze (upon whom he longed to retaliate because she repelled his amorous advances), were perhaps considered a worthy reply to the slanderous untruths which the Eléctress Sophie and the Duchess d’Orléans circulated about Eléonore.

In both cases, the ill feeling and hatred arose from wounded self-pride. The ignorant public which believes as often in words as in deeds, seized these lines with avidity, and they were

handed down in the memoirs of the time. In Germany they almost believed that the Duke Georges-Guillaume of Brunswick, had married the woman who was the intended wife of a Prince's valet de chambre. If the grandsons of Eléonore had not been George II of England, and Frederick II of Prussia, few persons in France would have appreciated the value of the conquest made by Alexandre Desmier's daughter. There were, it is true in Germany, more powerful Princes than the Dukes de Brunswick, viz.—the Emperor, the Elector de Brandebourg, and the Elector de Bavière; but there was not a house more respected, or a race to be compared with theirs. The Brunswicks were descendants of the illustrious Guelphs, known for ten centuries. In the olden times, all the countries north of the Elbe, the Haute, and the Basse-Saxe of the Bavière belonged to them; and no one could exercise imperial dignity without their approval. It wanted the endless struggling, the foolish boasts of Henri le Superbe, and the misfortunes of Henry le Lion to lower that unrivalled power which held all north Germany subject. Reduced after these misfortunes to their family possessions only; Othon, 'the child,' collected the *débris* of

that immense fortune, and founded the Ducal house of Brunswick, in the middle of the fourteenth century.

Although not so formidable, they are still powerful, and the extent of their dominion recently corresponded pretty accurately with the superficial area of the kingdom of Hanover, and of the Duchy of Brunswick.

In the seventeenth century the House of Brunswick was divided into two branches, the heads being cousins, Wolfenbüttel and Lunebourg. They were quite independent of one another, and upheld each other's interest when it did not clash; but they were both of jealous dispositions.

The last sovereign of Lunebourg, the Duke George, succeeded to the possessions of his brothers, as neither left a male heir, and at his death the division in the territory would have been once more united had he left all to his eldest son. But having four sons he divided his dominions thus—the eldest, Christian-Louis, had the principalities of Zell, of Lunebourg, and of Grubenhagen, with the Counties d'Hoya and of Diepholz; the second, Georges-Guillaume, took Hanover, Calenberg, and Göttingen; the third, Jean Frédéric, had but one appanage. The

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youngest, Ernest-Auguste, only received at first ecclesiastical endowments, but later on by the peace of Westphalia he was accorded the Bishopric of Osnabruck, which during the seige was occupied alternately by a catholic bishop and a protestant prince.

We thought it necessary to enter clearly into the details of the division amongst the Duke George's sons, as the question of succession between the brothers plays an important part in this work. The names of three out of four of these princes appear on nearly every page of the book.

With the eldest, Christian-Louis, we have little to do. He was a drunkard and a despot. He lowered himself to the extent of fighting with the bourgeois in the public thoroughfare as well as in his own residence. Towards the close of his life he took an active part in public affairs, and although his vices toned down a little as he advanced in years, he retained his rude unpolished manners to the last. He left no issue.

Georges-Guillaume was quite different, but he had his faults. He was reckless and thoughtless, shirking whenever he could his duty. A strange mixture of weakness and obstinacy, he had the

strength to adhere to his own opinions when he knew them to be false, and yet he was incapable of protecting himself from the designs of those who had gained his confidence, provided they were clever enough to conceal the influence they held over him. But for all that Georges-Guillaume had several estimable qualities.

He was of medium height, his eyes large and intelligent; he possessed handsome features and an imposing presence, and was so unaffected and genial in manner that he was universally liked. His character was noble and generous. He was very courageous in war and upheld the motto which he had adopted, *Quo fas et gloria ducunt*. And notwithstanding his frivolities no one was more interested in the welfare of his house than he. Above all things this Prince was frank and sincere, and a promise from him once given was never known to be broken. His benevolence towards the poor of all classes, more especially perhaps toward impoverished German nobles, was one of the principal causes of the influence which he always retained amongst the peasantry.

The inhabitants of Zell and Lunebourg are still fond of narrating anecdotes which they have

heard from their grandfathers about the last Duke de Zell.

That thoughtless frivolity united with an unrestrained love of excitement and pleasure, caused Georges-Guillaume to entirely neglect the affairs of the nation during the early years that succeeded his father's death.

Being a prince, and free from all control at the age of seventeen, it was only natural that he should wish to amuse himself and see life.

He deputed the prime minister, Bulow, to govern the state in his absence, and he passed several years in making a tour through England, France, Spain, Italy, and Holland.

It is certainly true that he studied the game of war in the camp of Frédéric-Henri d'Orange, and he acquired a certain knowledge of art in Italy; but we must own that what pleased him most in his travels was the Carnival of Venice. He revelled in the dissipation of those nights of folly passed at balls or at the gaming table, and so great was his infatuation that for years he passed several months in the city of the Doges.

At last Grapendorff, the Court Marshal, sent to Venice to remonstrate with him, as the people were dissatisfied at his continued absence from

the states. In his reply he said, 'My dear Maréchal, at Venice ennui is an unknown thing. I wish you were here with me. I warrant you would not be anxious to return to Germany.' And he demanded considerable funds to defray the expenses of his journey. In vain his mother and his ministers entreated him to return, it needed the kindly influence of Eléonore to recall him to his duties and his neglected subjects.

Jean-Frédéric was a big powerful man; weak, distrustful and effeminate. He seldom associated with his brothers, reserving all his affection for his sister, Sophie-Amélie, who married Frederick III, King of Denmark.

Of a reserved and thoughtful disposition, he preferred art and science, metaphysical problems and religious discussions to the affairs of the state. His correspondence with Leibnitz (his protégé) has been preserved, and from this it is proved that he was mainly instrumental in bringing the latter to Hanover. Like his brothers, he was fond of travelling, and during one of his visits to Rome, he made the acquaintance of several cardinals, the result of which was an announcement in 1651 that he had become a Catholic. This conversion estranged him still further from

his brothers, and his subjects in Zell and Hanover.

Ernest-Auguste possessed outwardly as many good qualities as Georges-Guillaume. In the 'Memoirs of the Electress Sophie,' one finds the following description of him. 'I saw him in Holland when he was quite young, but he has much improved, and everybody likes him. We played our guitars together, and he possesses the whitest and most shapely hands I ever saw. He also dances divinely.' Ernest-Auguste was a born politician, like his brother Georges-Guillaume he loved pleasure and luxury, and was equally sceptical; had he followed his inclinations he would have led an idle and dissipated existence, but his main object in life was the aggrandizement of his own house.

In his youth he was the inseparable companion of Georges-Guillaume, and although younger than his brother, by his determination and strength of mind, he exercised great influence over him until the last. Clever, intelligent, and not over scrupulous, he was bound to succeed in diplomacy, and, later on in spite of apparently unsurmountable objects, he obtained for himself and successors the dignity of Elector, and his son became King of England.

When Duke George died his eldest son was nineteen, Georges-Guillaume, seventeen, Jean-Frédéric, sixteen, and Ernest-Auguste was only eleven. Germany was still agitated by the effects of the 'thirty years' war. Her provinces had been devastated, her treasury exhausted, and the enemy was still in the heart of the country. The youthful descendants of the illustrious Guelphs, instead of endeavouring to re-establish the prosperity of the nation, followed their own devices.

In 1656 his Hanoverian subjects endeavoured to persuade their prince to reside with them, by urging on him the necessity of his marriage. At first he resolutely refused, but wearied by their tenacity, and really touched by the respectful interest they took in his welfare, he yielded a reluctant consent. The princess who pleased him most was Sophie the daughter of Frederick V and Elizabeth Stuart. She was then living with her brother the Elector Palatine, Charles-Louis, at the court of Heidelberg.

Hammerstein was sent to arrange matters before the Prince's arrival, and the ratification of the betrothal. It was decided that the latter should not be announced to the public until Georges-Guillaume had obtained from his States

the increase of his revenue requisite to enable him to establish a new Court.

In the meanwhile the Prince and his young brother went to spend some months at Venice. The happy bridegroom elect was no sooner surrounded by his old pleasures and associates, than he forgot all the sermons on propriety that he had lately listened to, and plunged into the wildest dissipation. As the Duchess Sophie remarked in her 'Memoiren der Herzogin Sophie,' 'It is not a good preparation for marriage. He should remember his promise and his *fiancée* who is waiting for him.' His letters to Heidelberg became fewer and colder. In fact he wanted to break off the engagement.

Notwithstanding his wildness, Georges-Guillaume was a man of honour, and he tried to repair his fault by persuading his brother to marry the Princess Sophie, promising to grant him a considerable pension and make his nephews his successors, as he intended to remain a bachelor.

Whether he was anxious to relieve his brother from a dilemma, or whether he was smitten by the charms of the Princess, it is hard to say, but one thing is certain, Ernest-Auguste allowed himself

to be persuaded. The Princess Sophie was one of the most fascinating and accomplished women of her period. She was a good linguist, spoke English, French, and German fluently; and was also well versed in the literature of these countries. She understood Italian, Spanish, and Latin. She sang very well, and her conversation was witty and amusing. It was impossible for a suitor to discern her bad qualities, one had to know her well before they appeared. Daughter and grand-daughter of one of the proudest kings in the world, she inherited all the faults of her race; being vindictive and ambitious. She never forgave or forgot an injury. It is true her pride supported her through her lover's neglect, and that would have been to any other woman such a cruel blow, she never outwardly resented. To use her own words, she was 'too proud to appear hurt.'

In the spring of 1657 Hammerstein left Hanover to alter the plans which he had made during the preceding year. He explained to the Princess and her brother the agreement that Georges-Guillaume was prepared to sign. He reminded them that Ernest-Auguste was certain ere long to receive the dignity of Bishop, and

since he intended to renounce his succession her children would be Georges-Guillaume's heirs. Christian - Louis, Georges - Guillaume's eldest brother, had been married for many years, but was without issue. Jean-Frédéric, the brother who came next, was too plethoric ever to have any hopes of paternity. It therefore followed that Ernest-Auguste, the youngest brother, would, if his life were spared, eventually become the head of the house. Looking at all these facts from a practical point of view, Sophie accepted Ernest-Auguste, and already in her imagination figured as the mother of the country. Those who sought to oppose her schemes were not to be envied.

The young couple were married, and, not having a Court of their own, went to Hanover, which was the residence of the reigning Duke, Georges-Guillaume. They stayed there three years, and during that time nothing occurred to mar the friendship between the two brothers. This is how the Duchess in her 'Memoirs' mentions the relationship between them. 'As I saw how much attached the Duke of Hanover was to my husband, to please him I was more affectionate in my manner towards the Duke

than to his other brothers. He joined us in all our amusements.'

Georges-Guillaume forgot his life of adventures in the society of his fascinating sister-in-law, who was such an ornament to his Court. But being constantly in her society the sentiments which he entertained towards her at the time he wished to marry her revived, and at last he openly avowed his passion and told the Princess he was sorry he had resigned her to his brother. In fact his attentions became so marked that they could not escape the husband's notice, and a coldness then ensued between the brothers. The Duchess was heard to remark, 'A more sensitive woman than I would be very miserable with these two jealous men.'

Happily for Sophie the titular Bishop of Osnabruck died in 1661 and left his palace to Duc Ernest-Auguste.

M. d'Osnabruck and Madame l'Evêque left Hanover and installed their miniature court in the episcopal palace of Ibourg.

Thus Georges-Guillaume was once more alone; and as he had ample leisure to ponder over the past, he realised in his solitude the importance to himself of the irrevocable contract he had signed.

CHAPTER III

ELÉONORE AND GEORGES-GUILLAUME

THE Prince became a prey to morbid cravings. The high spirits and indifference of youth had entirely disappeared. His heart was wounded by the remembrance that the woman whom he now loved might have been his, had he not given her to another. For the first time he felt the misery of the solitude to which by his own act he was condemned. Without noticing it he had reached the time of life when even the most inconsiderate think a little of the future and the long days of a lonely old age ; and he could now understand the need of true affection and a lasting attachment.

Hoping by change of scene to divert his thoughts he decided to travel, and at the Court of the Landgrave of Hesse he met the Princess de Tarente, then visiting her relatives, and attended by Mdlle. Eléonore d'Olbreuze and Mdlle. de la Mothe. This was during the winter of 1663 to 1664. Eléonore's beauty and wit made from the first a deep impression on the Prince. Even the grave Jean-Frédéric (who was staying at Cassel) was smitten by her charms. Thus both brothers paid their addresses to the Princess's lovely companion; one prudently no doubt, the other with all the ardour of his fiery temperament. We cannot exactly say how long this state of things continued, but it is certain that towards the end of February Madame d'Osnabruck arrived at the court of Hesse, and the Princess de Tarente accompanied by her two maids of honour was then on her return journey to Holland. Sophie went to Venice to rejoin her husband, she was disappointed at finding that Eléonore and her companion had quitted Cassel, as she had intended to induce them to join her suite. She, however, wrote them to this effect, but Eléonore suffered Mdlle. de la Mothe to accept the invitation alone, declining the invitation for herself.

In the meanwhile Georges-Guillaume could not tear himself away from the object of his affections, and in this instance one can easily see the difference of character between the brothers. Georges-Guillaume was madly in love with Eléonore ; he followed her everywhere and urged his suit at every turn. Jean-Frédéric loved her also, but his conduct was influenced by conflicting sentiments. He was naturally weak, and he felt his elder brother had been beforehand with him and gained Eléonore's love. Therefore having never been on good terms with his brother and dreading his anger, he went for a tour in Italy, and Georges-Guillaume pursued his lady love to Holland.

For nearly a year Jean Frédéric corresponded with Eléonore, and we possess several of his letters. In every line of these *galants billets* he reveals his passion, although one can also clearly define his painful presentiment that his suit would be unsuccessful. During his journey he stayed at Augsbourg where his first thoughts were of Eléonore d'Olbreuze. The following is an extract from one of his letters dated the 25th of May, 1664: 'If I did not write to you until I reached Venice, you would have thought,

Mdlle., that it needed the sight of your friends to remind me of you, and I should be sorry to impress you with so bad an opinion of my memory. Having once seen you, even the most absent-minded could not forget you.'

Eléonore replied to this from the Hague on the 30th of June in a short, cold note, evidently much too formal to suit the taste of her lover, who for some time afterwards reproached her for her ceremonious letter, and said he wanted to have her always with him. But doubtless Eléonore was well aware that there had been some very unpleasant scenes between the two brothers respecting herself, and it is evident that Jean-Frédéric preserved a painful recollection of them. 'In conclusion,' the latter wrote, 'I will not interfere any more. I dare not say there is no one who desires your presence here more passionately than I, but I cannot refrain from assuring you that no one is more devoted to you than Jean-Frédéric.'

Eléonore replied to this from the Hague on August 15th, when she was feeling hurt by Georges-Guillaume's trifling. His nature was changeable, and being irritated by Eléonore's resistance to his addresses he had abruptly left

her. All those around her endeavoured to persuade her that the Prince was fickle and incapable of remaining constant for long, so she ended in believing them, and decided to send a few words of encouragement and consolation to her timid lover. In this letter she told him she regretted he was so far away, and she seemed disposed to join him. Anyone ignorant of the language which court etiquette imposed in those days on a subject writing to a prince, would have said her letter was the work of a coquette.

During the year 1664, the plague having broken out in the Hague, Jean-Frédéric was anxious about Eléonore, and in a letter dated from Venice, he wrote, 'I heartily wish that you were in a state to tell me that you entertain towards me in some degree, the great regard I have always had for you. If I could apply to myself what you wrote me about the tour in Italy, your wish would be already granted. You have only to explain yourself seriously on this matter Mademoiselle.'

Eléonore was then at Breda. On her return to the Hague she found Jean-Frédéric's letter awaiting her. Evidently the Prince's ultimatum did not please her.

She replied from the Hague on the 20th of December that she 'was waiting for the marriage of his Serene Highness to enable him to place her near his wife at Court as he promised, and hoped that he considered her a loyal subject, and understood that no one was more zealous and faithful in his service than herself.' In a postscript she added, 'They are daily expecting Monseigneur le Duc Georges-Guillaume to arrive here.'

Georges-Guillaume was away when she wrote. We cannot say whether State affairs or a lover's misunderstanding caused his absence just then.

During Jean-Frédéric's stay in Italy his elder brother passed the greater part of his time in Holland, paying his addresses to Eléonore.

The author of '*L'Avanture Historique*' gives us a long account of this stage of Eléonore's life. It is all told under cover of the pseudonymous, for instance 'A certain Princess d . . .' (whose actions were not noticeable until now) was then staying in Holland, and she seems to have been Mdlle. d'Olbreuze's rival for some time. The Princess was flattered by the Duke's frequent visits, and thought he was in love with her and intended to marry her. Georges-Guillaume was obliged to conceal his feelings, otherwise he

would have roused the Princess's jealousy, or offended the real object of his affections. Every time he conversed with Eléonore he did so with the greatest caution, and he thoroughly enjoyed the romance of a hidden attachment. He was delighted if during the evening's amusements he found an opportunity to whisper, unperceived by the others, in 'la belle Clorinde's' ear. (That was the pseudonym given to Mdle. d'Olbreuze.)

Obstacles and resistance are well-known incentives to love. The necessity of attending to the momentary rivalry of Jean-Frédéric, and the reserved attitude of Eléonore, who, in spite of the frivolity of Court life, at that time had preserved a spotless reputation, all tended to strengthen Georges-Guillaume's love for her. He endeavoured to win her by every means in his power; asked her father to consent to amorganatic marriage, as being a reigning prince he could not do any more. He induced the Princess de Tarente to influence Eléonore in his favour. So many proofs of constancy and affection from a handsome fascinating prince helped to shake her resolution. It is well known that the morals of women in those days were not so good as they are in ours. To this the courts of Louis XIV, of

Auguste le Fort, of Victor Amédée of Savoy, of Ernest-Auguste of Hanover, and of his son, bear witness. The most rigid virtue gave way to gratify a sovereign's pleasure. Therefore, being the daughter of a gentleman ruined by war and persecuted for his religion, deprived of her mother's loving care (she had been dead for some years, and Alexandre Desmier, Lord of Olbreuze, was married for the second time to Jeanne Bérenger, of Beignon), and having an uncertain future, she was touched by Georges-Guillaume's constancy, and placed reliance on his promises. He was possessed of a loyal character, and had ever been known to keep his word. So Eléonore yielded to the persuasions of the Princess de Tarente, and gave her consent. The Princess de Tarente organised a *fête* to celebrate Eléonore's twenty-sixth birthday, and amongst her presents was a locket containing the Duke's portrait. Georges-Guillaume passed the winter at the Hague, and seeing his *bien-aimée* every day he was feeling sure of the success of his suit, when he was compelled to leave her, as his presence was needed in Germany.

Christian-Louis of Brunswick died on the 15th of March, 1665, and in the absence of his rival

Georges-Guillaume, who was then staying near Mdle. d'Olbreuze, Jean-Frédéric, the third son of the Duke Georges, laid claim to the States over which deceased had ruled. Until now history has attributed this act to ambition, but Jean-Frédéric's letters recently discovered in the library at Hanover leads one to suppose that he was influenced more by a lover's revenge than political motives. It is not improbable that this violent measure on the part of an ordinarily peaceful and wavering prince, was occasioned in a great measure by a fit of anger due to the favour Eléonore had shewn to his brother.

Delay was perilous to Georges-Guillaume. His ministers wrote several letters urging on him the necessity of his immediate return. It was with difficulty he decided to leave his new conquest, and he arrived at Hanover in very depressed spirits.

In the 'Memoiren der Herzogin Sophie' she writes, 'My husband went to Hanover and found his brother in great consternation. He comforted him as best he could, gave him the benefit of his advice, and called upon the troops to assist him in asserting his rights.'

Fearing a civil war and having his two

brothers against him, Jean-Frédéric consented to a compromise. All the spring and the greater part of the summer passed in negotiations in which France, Sweden, and the electors of Cologne and of Brandebourg acted as mediators. A treaty signed at Hildesheim on the 12th of September 1665, terminated the trouble. The three brothers made a new division in which Georges-Guillaume being the eldest received Christian-Louis' share and his residence at Zell, Jean-Frédéric had Hanover and Göttingen. Ernest-Auguste retained his bishopric and acquired the county of Diepholz. Henceforth Eléonore's lover became Duke de Zell and he took the title and domains which he would eventually share with the woman who became his wife.

During the time these important affairs occupied the administration, Georges-Guillaume had not forgotten Eléonore. Unfortunately their correspondence has not been preserved; but doubtless they exchanged letters daily. The Prince being thus separated from the object of all his thoughts, was never tired of talking of her in his daily conversations with his brother, and also with Mdlle. de la Mothe, Eléonore's late

companion who was now in attendance on Madame d'Osnabruck.

During the arrangement of the treaty which fixed the boundaries of the States, active negotiations were carried on with the object of inducing Eléonore to come to Germany. The Duchess de la Trémoille died during the summer of 1665. The Princess de Tarente was in consequence obliged to go to France but she left the maids of honour Mesdemoiselles d'Olbreuze, and de la Manselière alone at Bois-le-Duc. This circumstance greatly facilitated Georges-Guillaume's plans. Ernest-Auguste was quite ready to assist the brother who had always befriended him. Sophie was pleased to find her brother-in-law had forgotten his infatuation for herself, and that his new passion would occupy her husband's leisure time. Neither of them foresaw the possible consequences of the adventure which they were preparing by so actively seconding the Duke de Zell's wishes. On the 10th of September, 1665, Madame d'Osnabruck wrote to Jean-Frédéric, 'I believe the d'Olbreuze will really come to Ibourg.'

A few days afterwards Mdlle. de la Mothe left Ibourg in a coach drawn by six horses. The

object of her journey was to bring 'The d'Olbreuze' and her companion from Bois-le-Duc. Our future bride demurred sometime, trying hard to overcome her love. Her prudence foreshadowed obstacles in the accomplishment of her enterprise, which she regarded as the most delicate and compromising affair of her life. She, however, looked upon the Prince's act, in persisting in his design, and all for his love of her, as an undoubted proof of his constancy, and so she followed the inclination of her heart, and accepted the handsome present which her faithful friend brought her as a precious pledge of the Prince's word.

Before she left she took the precaution to apprise the Prince de Tarente of her intended journey. A short time afterwards the carriage conveying these three young girls was on the way to Germany. Neither of them, nor any of the persons at Zell and Hanover guessed the terrible consequences this resolution of Eléonore's would have in the future. The lovely d'Olbreuze will herself be the first victim.

The cause of love is inexplicable and its effects are fearful. . . . If Cleopatra's nose had been a little shorter it would have changed the face of the whole world.

CHAPTER IV

MADAME D'HARBOURG

ELÉONORE was received by Sophie on her arrival at Ibourg. Georges-Guillaume was at Hanover with the Bishop d'Osnabruck.

She, who afterwards became Eléonore's worst enemy, began by acknowledging the favourable impression which the new arrival made on her. 'Envious rivals had described her to me as being very lively and sprightly, fond of spiteful jesting as a means of exhibiting her wit, . . . but I found her quite different. She affected a serious air and spoke little, but very agreeably. She has a handsome face and a good figure, and she is very amiable.'

Here is another witness respecting Eléonore's *début* at the Court of Ibourg. Sophie informed her brother, the Elector Palatine Charles-Louis, that Mdlle. d'Olbreuze had arrived, and he described her to his wife in the following terms, 'My sister has written to tell of the arrival of two very beautiful and accomplished young ladies. One is the d'Olbreuze of whom you have no doubt heard. I assure you I was very favourably impressed by her. She reminds me of your friend the Signora, being about her height, and has eyes and hair of the same colour. She is not at all affected, and one can tell by her manners that she has been well brought up. The other is a sister of De la Chevallerie's. She is very fair and has golden hair. She speaks Italian well and sings prettily, accompanying herself on the guitar. She seems a nice girl but not having been at Court before her manners are countryfied.'

Speaking of Georges-Guillaume's arrival, Sophie says, 'I remarked by the expression of their eyes the understanding that existed between Georges-Guillaume and the d'Olbreuze.'

There is not a trace left of the negotiations which then took place in the records of the Chancellor's office, and here again we are obliged

to refer to the 'Memoires de la Duchesse.' It is certain that the entire family, including Mdle. d'Osnabruck's maids of honour, took part in them. Georges-Guillaume neglected no entreaties, and perhaps he would have conceded to Eléonore there and then the marriage which she so earnestly begged for, had not Sophie and her husband taken such care to prevent it.

One day the Bishop said to his brother that he 'understood from De la Mothe that the d'Olbreuze expected the Duke to marry her.' This remark was made in such a manner that it could not fail to provoke a rejoinder. The Prince replied. 'If she wants that, let her return from whence she came. I will never commit such an absurdity.' Influenced by his brother and his sister-in-law, Georges-Guillaume rejected the idea of any marriage, even the morganatic alliance which he had himself proposed at the Hague. It needed ten years of the most tender attachment on the part of Eléonore, to make him upset this resolution which he had come to under pressing circumstances, and Sophie's ill-timed interference.

The funeral of Christian-Louis took place at Zell on the 11th November, 1665. The Court of the Bishop of Osnabruck, including Mdle.

d'Olbreuze who travelled with the maids of honor, attended it. It was here, at Zell, that Georges-Guillaume made his last effort to win Eléonore. He offered to make a special act in her favour, thus to seal their union, and said he would endeavour by his affection to remove any humiliation her position might entail. He promised to live with her always, and assured her an honorable position at his Court, and a jointure should she survive him. He made his brother and sister-in-law sign the contract.

That document in which both the Duchess Sophie and the Bishop of Osnabruck guaranteed Georges-Guillaume's constancy was the only assurance Eléonore had. On the 12th of November 1665 Sophie wrote to the Elector Charles-Louis, 'The marriage of conscience between Georges-Guillaume and the d'Olbreuze is made public, notwithstanding that the ceremony was a silent one and there were no witnesses or rejoicings.'

All the historical works printed in the last century or during Georges-Guillaume's reign, fix the year of the marriage as 1665 and from that time call Eléonore his wife, although it is certain no ceremony took place. The only official act

was a ducal order dated November 15th, 1665, giving Eléonore a dowry of five million crowns should she survive Georges-Guillaume.

Eléonore was not at first acknowledged as the Duke de Zell's wife. They only accorded her at Court the position of 'friend' to the King and the title of Madame d'Harbourg, that being the name of an important town in the Duchy of Lunebourg, borne by the members of the House of Brunswick in olden times.

The public considered it as merely a liaison, in fact an ancient 'Chroniquer Lunebourgeois' calls her the 'Madame' of Duke Georges-Guillaume. The whole country considered it a great pity that such a lovely and virtuous young lady had followed the bad example of the time. Others excused her conduct, saying 'that a girl who owned nothing except a virtuous reputation would be very stupid to refuse to become a 'grande princesse' when she had the chance, as it was a position worth having at any price.

It is doubtless that Eléonore had not given up the idea of righting herself in a position which she had refused so many times, and only accepted with great reluctance. We shall see how in the future her better nature prompted her to make

several attempts to secure that great favour which she was denied.

The Duchess Sophie seemed at first inclined to take Eléonore's part, and on the 16th of December 1665, she wrote to her brother, 'We are still admiring the mutual caresses of Georges-Guillaume and his Signora. That they are very fond of one another anyone can see. The Prince is very thoughtful and kind, and neglects no opportunity of trying to make amends to Eléonore for the request which he had denied her. To please his brother the Bishop of Osnabruck paid Mdlle. d'Harbourg great respect; while she, to keep herself in the Prince's good graces, accorded his relations the deference which was their due.

The following is a letter in the Duchess Sophie's Memoirs dated the 14th of March 1666 : 'I am the happiest woman in the world, although they pass remarks at my position, as I have never received the blessing of the Church. It is faith that makes a marriage, and his Serene Highness gave me his in the presence of his relations who signed the contract in which the Prince undertook never to have another wife. You would be pleased could you see the perfect

harmony of our household; yours does not approach it.'

It was in these terms Eléonore expressed herself in a letter to an old friend of the family M. de Gênebat. The original letter is lost but the above is a copy of it in the Memoirs of the Duchess.

Three days later the Duchess sent news from the Court of Zell to her brother and told him that Eléonore would soon become a mother, 'Pour la Cour de Cell, il n'en faut point parler, car il n'y a rien de bon qu'une bonne table et Madame d'Harbourg qui est grosse.'

On the 15th of September 1666 Eléonore gave birth to a daughter who received the name of Sophie Dorothée. The Duke was greatly pleased at the event. Eléonore suffered intensely during her illness, so much so that the effects ruined her health and prematurely aged her. The Prince who until now had been fickle and light-hearted, showed the deep affection of which he was capable. In the account of this incident in Eléonore's life given by the anonymous historian he says, 'Nothing could be more affecting than their fortitude under these trying circumstances. Madame was now an object of compassion even to the most indifferent, with tears in her eyes she

reproached her husband, and then with a smiling face added that it was her love for him which had brought her to this pitiable state, but she said she would die willingly if she thought he would always love her memory and cherish their child.

For some time her life was despaired of, and it was feared that if she recovered she would be an invalid for life, but Heaven was merciful and spared both her own and the child's life. After a long illness she was restored to perfect health.

Georges - Guillaume possessed a generous character. The disinterested and passionate love which Eléonore had for him, it was impossible to doubt, she had given him so many proofs of affection and deep gratitude, that her influence completely changed his character. The incorrigible *viveur*, the dissipated prince had disappeared.

The Prince daily discovered fresh virtues in her he loved. Her good nature, her horror of intrigue, her generous heart, which was never closed to misfortune, her good sense and complete absence of affectation, together with her aversion to frivolity and vanity, all made up a thousand attractions which charmed him. Nothing in the castle was unworthy of her care, she personally superintended all the domestic arrangements, since

it was conducive to the happiness of the Prince ; thus little by little there was established between them a perfect sympathy, which lasted all their lives, and from this time Georges-Guillaume consulted her on every subject.

The outside world thought it a miracle. ' Religious minded consider his union is a marriage before God,' wrote the Duchess Sophie to her brother on the 2nd of April, 1657, but she added, ' Being more sceptical, I prefer it should be before God than before men.'

Her life had become such a complete transformation and such a startling success that those who had thrown her into their brother's arms as a plaything, could not be expected to derive pleasure from the result of their act. They had intended to prove Georges - Guillaume's weakness, and failed. Had Eléonore been a neglected mistress, it would have been different, but a woman really loved and esteemed, and who was capable of influencing the Prince, was a cause for uneasiness. From this time, the letters of Sophie to her parents, as well as her Memoirs, breathe the hatred which she felt for Eléonore. The latter's brother had come to see her, with the object of trying to persuade the Duke de Zell to

consecrate his union with her by a marriage. He dwelt on the position of her family in France, and reminded the Duke of the friendship that existed between his sister and the Princess de Tarente. Of the force of these arguments the Prince was well aware, but he did not allow himself to be convinced by them. The Duchess Sophie shrugged her shoulders and remarked : ' Cela nous fit pitié.' Her spiteful speeches were unceasing. Georges-Guillaume's love for her rival, who was her inferior by birth, filled her heart with rage, for she knew her husband had long been unfaithful to her. The Prince loaded the Duchess Sophie with attentions, he gave several *fêtes* in her honour during the winter of 1667. He always evinced the greatest affection for his nephews, and invented all sorts of amusements to please them ; amongst other things he formed the sons of the peasantry into a company of young soldiers. In vain he neglected no opportunity of affirming his promise that they should be his heirs. Sophie's domineering spirit felt a rival influence. Outwardly, she was still friendly with Eléonore, but in her heart she had declared war.

The change in Georges-Guillaume's character resulted in his finding his stay in Zell agreeable.

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Hitherto he had detested the place, and it is not surprising that he had abhorred this residence. That great plain which extended to the north of Hanover as far as Brême and to Hambourg, and which then constituted the uneven kingdom of the Prince of Guelph is one of the most solitary parts of Germany. All that meets the eye is sand strewn with pebbles, puddles of water and clumps of heath emerging from blackish turf-pits. This is the 'Lande de Lunebourg.' Here one finds clusters of woods of pine and oak trees, and in a certain number of places, sparse cultivation. At Bevenson and the Gœhrde forests of oak and beech trees, are the lairs of the savage hosts of that desolate region, and here is the only break in the long length of the Aller's verdant course.

The little town of Zell is alongside the river, crouching at the foot of the ducal castle like a timid flock pressing close to its shepherd. Although a good distance from the Hartz regions the houses in Zell were made of the trunks of oak and fir-trees. Like Wernigerode, Halberstadt and Hildesheim, the houses have a fragile appearance. The façades being covered with ingenious pieces of sculpture representing religious devices or the ever constant theme of Bacchus.

The oddly constructed roofings of the houses project over the streets, and the queer designs cut in wood stand out in a bold outline, which gives to the towns of that part of Germany such a picturesque appearance. Such was the town of Zell in the seventeenth century, and some parts of it having escaped the work of time, are still the same.

The castle is situated on rising ground, and is surrounded by the Aller's winding course, but it was not then at all like what it is at the present time. It had been completely neglected for many years, and was composed of several turrets and incongruous towers of all ages. Georges-Guil-laume now consented to live in it, but not as it stood, it was not beautiful or spacious enough for the woman he loved. He sent for an Italian architect and workmen, and they worked from 1670 to 1675, when the Castle of Zell being completed was one of the finest in Germany. It is the same to-day as it was then, and is composed of four wings, of which one dates from the German renaissance. These wings surround a vast court. The entire building is of good design and is in the renaissance style. It forms a quadrangle, flanked at the corners by many angled

turrets, which overlook one another. Nearly four hundred windows illuminate this enormous dwelling of one hundred and eighty apartments.

Now if one visits the castle, it is only to find the rooms stripped and neglected, and the long corridors deserted, which were once animated by such a brilliant Court. No doubt those apartments with the high mantelpieces and rich ceilings were occupied by the Queen. That exquisitely arranged room with its alcove framed with flowers was designed for her. For her who after a few days of triumph, was wounded in her dearest affections, and died of a broken heart. It was here the prisoner of Ahlden lisped her first words, and here her heart was oppressed in the presence of these sweet, sad memories.

The luxurious taste which presided over the re-construction of the Castle of Zell was prevalent at all the European Courts of this time. It was the age of fastidious and brilliant costumes. Louis XIV set the example, and persons of both high and low degree imitated him. Germany, after the savage fury and devastation of the Thirty Years' War, wished for peace and tranquillity to enable her to establish a love of art, and improve the rude manners of her people.

Even the art of war, which ought to have developed at this period, had progressed more in other countries than Germany. This explains why several princes did not hesitate to search abroad for means of improving the manners of the people. And this was no doubt the reason why so many French and Italian, and later on refugees from the 'Edict of Nantes,' obtained high positions at various German Courts. Germany was obliged to accept as a necessity what until now she had discountenanced.

Georges-Guillaume having visited all the Courts of Europe made use of his experiences to develop his naturally refined and luxurious tastes. Eléonore's presence at his Court was another reason for his partiality for the French.

From this time we find several influential Frenchmen at Zell. M. de Beauregard, of a Languedoc family, was raised to such a high position that Louis XIV thought he ought to send his brother-in-law to Zell as Minister of France. And assuredly it was not by merit that M. Balthazard was selected, for Gourville said, 'They ought to have lent him a person of intelligence to assist him.' Henri Desmier, Lord of Beignon, was first equerry. In the Ducal

troops and in those of the Bishop of Osnabruck one saw the names of de Villiers, Malortie, and Melleville.

Eléonore was surrounded by a brilliant throng. She reigned as sovereign in a palatial residence, and was sought after by princes and others who wanted to obtain favours from him with whom they resided, and who little by little they came to regard as her husband; yet she reproached herself insensibly for the position she would soon be in. Until now they had never dared to introduce her at the receptions of sovereigns or princes. In August, 1671, the Queen of Denmark was at Altona. The Dukes went to see her there, and Madame d'Harbourg took her place at the royal table.

About this time there appeared at the Court of Zell a person for whom the Duchess Sophie openly declared her hatred, and who played a considerable *rôle* in Eléonore's fortune. Jean Helwig Sinold, baron of Schütz, received in June 1670 the office of Chancellor to the Ducal government. Schütz was an upright man, attached to his master, but perhaps a little more attached to his own advancement. Bernstorff his son-in-law and successor has boasted in his Memoirs

of his knowledge of his father-in-law's private affairs. Schütz noticed the conspiracy always revolving round Eléonore, and he resolved to help in its destruction. Perhaps he was sorry for the master whom he liked, and who had entered into an agreement when his character was as yet unformed. If one is to believe the Memoirs of the Duchess Sophie, Schütz endeavoured by every means to break the bonds with which Georges-Guillaume had himself rivetted his future. Suitors for Sophie-Dorothée helped to further his wish.

The Duke Antoine-Ulric de Brunswick Wolfenbüttel, a cousin of the Duke de Lunebourg, had suffered his finances to become very embarrassed. He had a numerous family and was possessed of a taste for intrigue and speculation. The Duke de Zell's daughter was barely six years old, and already the rich *dot* which her father would give her was a subject of calculation. In the course of the year 1671, Georges-Guillaume with his brother's approval signed an act granting the revenues of two districts of his States, viz., Scharnebeck and Büttlingen, for the payment of Madame d'Harbourg's dowry. An act of September the first in the same year also

subject to the approval of Ernest-Auguste, bequeathed to Madame d'Harbourg and her daughter the revenues of the towns and districts of Dannenberg and Hitzacker. So much wealth was a consideration to the needy cousins. With a little dexterity they made the young girl's position right, and then Antoine-Ulric proposed for the hand of Sophie-Dorothée for his eldest son.

Schütz wished for this alliance to further his views for assisting this Court, so he became a devoted auxiliary to the Duke Antoine; and it was only natural that the Duke de Zell should have been anxious to secure his dearly loved child's happiness. Thus it came to pass that a coalition was formed to raise the mother and daughter at the same time.

Until now Sophie's domineering pride had persisted in considering Eléonore as a plaything of which sooner or later the Prince would tire, and now the fear of suffering herself from the snare she had set for another transported her with fury. Her ruling passion was avarice, and she looked on each generous gift which the Duke made to Eléonore and her daughter as something taken from herself and her sons. Her animosity

towards Madame d'Harbourg, whom she usually designated as 'that person,' knew no bounds. She openly declared her scorn and hatred of Sophie-Dorothée. Georges-Guillaume and Eléonore becoming anxious about the safety of their child's future, wrote in 1671 to Louis XIV, asking him to naturalize their daughter, and in case of necessity to allow her to seek refuge in France. It is worthy of notice that the Duchess considered the Duke Antoine-Ulric and Chancellor Schütz much more responsible for raising Mdme. d'Harbourg's rank than she was herself. There is in this a secret avowal of praise towards Eléonore which the Duchess cannot in justice refuse her rival.

The treaties and negociations, which ended in making Eléonore a princess, lasted three years. We will dispense with minute details regarding this event.

Georges - Guillaume and his brother had created for themselves positions of considerable importance in the Empire. The good state of their finances and troops, their energetic politics, and the Emperor Léopold's anxiety to form an alliance with them, all tended to assist in exalting Eléonore.

Since 1665, the Princes possessed between them more than twelve thousand soldiers, whom they had sent to assist Holland against France. In 1667 and 1668, Louis XIV was obliged to treat with them, and he sent envoys to their Court. In 1670 Vergus came on a special mission to the Bishop of Osnabruck. From 1669 until 1678 the Dukes of Brunswick were constantly associated with the negotiations and wars which followed the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, and preceded the peace of Nimégue. Always faithful to the Emperor's cause, respectful, and yet holding the control of the entire circle of the Basse-Saxe, of which Georges-Guillaume was the chief, the Dukes had a position in the north of Germany, second only to the Elector of Brandebourg. In 1674 the Duke de Zell conducted the Brunswick troops to the Imperial army, then facing the indefatigable Turenne at Alsace. In 1675, Ernest-Auguste and Georges-Guillaume gained a brilliant success at Cousarbrück against the Maréchal de Créqui, seized Trèves and captured the Maréchal.

The Emperor could refuse nothing to such useful allies. He granted Georges-Guillaume's request, which was to bestow on Madame

d'Harbourg and her children the title of Comtes and Comtesses de Wilhelmsbourg, the name of a fief given to Madame d'Harbourg. At the same time the Empress Eléonore, third wife of the Emperor Ferdinand III, sent the insignia of 'L'Ordre de la Vertu' to the new Comtesse, an order which until now had only been granted to princesses. Very soon other measures were taken which aided their efforts. First Sophie-Dorothée was, in the event of her marrying a prince, allowed to assume the arms of the House of Brunswick. Then in 1675 a special act to legitimise the child and her mother's marriage, which would have assured her position, were both stopped: it ran as follows, 'The wife of Georges-Guillaume and his children by her, excepting Sophie-Dorothée already born, will not have any other title than that of Comtes and Comtesses de Wilhelmsbourg.' Ernest-Auguste insisted before he gave his assent, that his brother should renew that part of the old agreement relating to the succession, and that the states of Lunebourg should come back to him after Eléonore's accouchement, in the event of her giving birth to a son.

The act which regulated this new dispensation was signed by the Duke Georges-Guillaume,

the Bishop of Osnabruck, the Duke Antoine-Ulric and Eléonore Desmier, dame d'Harbourg, Comtesse de Wilhelmsbourg. On the 2nd of February the Emperor's confirmation arrived.

This deed was drawn out and arranged at Zell, during the time that the Dukes were fighting at Cousarbrück and at Trèves. The brothers were anxious after their successes to return to their residences. One can understand Eléonore's anxiety to see her spouse: 'Think what pleasure it will give me to embrace this glorious Prince,' she wrote to the Duchess of Mecklenbourg as soon as she heard of the victory. She was rendered still more anxious to see him, by the unpleasantness of her relationship with Sophie.

At the news of the successes of the arms of Brunswick, the Duchess Sophie wrote a very bitter note to Eléonore. She never mentioned the Duke de Zell, but told her that 'the Bishop of Osnabruck's men had bravely done their duty, which was more than could be said of the men of Zell.' Wounded in her affections, Eléonore sent an indignant reply. The rupture between the two rivals was now irremediable.

On arriving at home, the Duke de Zell had too many cares to occupy himself with these dissensions. 'I think I shall be married soon,' were the first words he uttered before his brother on his return. Judge of the Duchess Sophie's rage on hearing this remark. The Duke Antoine-Ulric insisted that Georges-Guillaume's wife should take the title of Princess. Once they thought the entire plan would fall through. On account of the agreement entered into between the brothers, it was impossible to conclude anything without the Bishop of Osnabruck, and the latter, instigated no doubt by his wife, refused to hear any more on the subject, and unexpectedly started on a tour in Holland.

During two months Sophie endeavoured to prevent her intended sister-in-law from being made a princess. One can imagine it was not an easy task to make the Duke de Zell change his mind again, and the arguments employed by the Duchess would have been better had they been less personal. Her letters to Georges-Guillaume are a *chef d'œuvre* of selfishness and artful interference, which she did not trouble herself to disguise. At every line one can see her fear that the Duke de Zell intended to wrong

her children. At least twenty times she rudely reminded him of his agreement. All these suspicions greatly irritated her brother-in-law, he would not retract his word, with regard to his nephews, but he resolved to take no notice about his marriage. Between two stages of war, viz., the sieges of Bremervorden and of Stade Suédoise, towns of the Bishop of Osnabruck, the religious ceremony was celebrated in the presence of Duke Antoine-Ulric and Chancellor Schütz. The betrothal of Sophie-Dorothée and the Prince Auguste-Frédéric of Wolfenbüttel, was arranged on the same day, April 2nd, 1676.

In the course of the month the marriage was made public. On the 24th of April, Eléonore's name was for the first time associated with her husband's in the church prayers; and the Emperor's envoy at Zell saluted the new Duchess with the title of Highness. This last homage which stamped her defeat was Sophie's *coup de grâce*.

CHAPTER V

THE DUCHESS ELÉONORE DE BRUNSWICK-ZELL—THE COURT OF ZELL

THE news was soon known throughout Europe. Early in May Louis XIV, who was then at the camp of Sévourg, was informed of the event by M. Rousseau, the French Minister at Hanover. The latter also wrote on the 27th of April to the Minister Pomponne as follows, 'I had the honour to write and tell you some time since, that the Emperor had made the Duke de Zell and Madame d'Harbourg's daughter a Princess. The Duke has since then obtained a similar distinction for Madame d'Harbourg, and they announced in the Church of Zell, a few days ago, that certain reasons having prevented the Duke de Zell from

making his marriage public, these reasons now ceased to operate, and he wished that Madame d'Harbourg, who had in reality been his wife for some time, should in future be treated as a Princess and his legitimate wife. She has already received several congratulations, and amongst others, those of the Bishop of Osnabruck's eldest son, who is now staying at Zell. This left-handed marriage has been the work of Mdme. la Duchess d'Osnabruck, to secure for her children the Duke de Zell's succession. But her hopes and calculations will in all probability be frustrated, for the Duchess de Zell is again expecting to become a mother, and if she has a son he would be Duke de Brunswick, and consequently the Duke de Zell's heir, thus whatever promises he has made to the Bishop of Osnabruck respecting his succession, this event will alter them a little.'

According to the '*Mémoires de la Duchess Sophie*,' Georges-Guillaume's conduct was a subject of indifference to the greater part of the Courts of Europe. He continued his military operations against Sweden. He had undertaken this campaign without his brothers' support, and counted on increasing his dominions through it. Sweden, having been defeated at Fehrbellin by

the Grand Elector, had enough to do to defend Pomerania. The victorious troops of their ally the King of France, were separated from her by some distance. The Duke de Zell taking advantage of this circumstance, had joined his cousin de Wolfenbüttel and the Bishop of Munster against her. During this time the Duke de Zell's envoy, Schulembourg, was at Vienna urging the Emperor to ratify his conquests, he having seized one after another the Swedish towns of the Bishop of Brême, hoping that when peace was established all that he had accomplished would be considered in his favour. 'Firm and noble politics' as Pomponne expressed them in his memoirs.

Georges-Guillaume had been obliged to leave the siege of Stade to celebrate his marriage. A few days after the ceremony he returned to take his place at the head of his troops, leaving the Duchess at Zell, who in spite of her earnest wish to follow him, was prevented by her condition from doing so.

The town had nearly surrendered when the news was brought to him that the Duchess had given birth to a child and her life was in danger. Being only two days' journey from his residence, the Duke was almost immediately on the spot.

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When he arrived Eléonore was to all appearances dying, her child was still-born, and her attendants thinking there was no chance of her recovery had left her alone. The passionate caresses and despairing cries of her husband restored her to consciousness. Thus in pain and sorrow began the life of the new Duchess de Zell. As long as her husband was near lavishing upon her his loving care she clung to life, but had any hostile influence alienated him from her, then her joy would have changed into inexpressible torments.

Freed from the domestic troubles which had fettered him for the last two years, Georges-Guillaume resolutely continued his policy of conquests. Ernest-Auguste still bore his brother a grudge, therefore the Duke de Zell acted alone, displaying an energy of which no one would have thought him capable. This result was produced by Eléonore's presence. In the '*Avanture Historique*,' pages 56 and 58, one finds, 'She alone had the power of keeping him in his own home, thus giving him an opportunity of increasing his dominions and acquiring glory everywhere, at the same time watching over the welfare of his subjects, and taking advantage of his neighbours' misfortunes, during the war which was kindling

over all parts of Germany. At the close of the year 1676 the Duke de Zell sent 5000 men to join the Imperial armies in the province of Deux-Pouts. The following year his Lieutenant-General Chauvet, and 8000 of his troops co-operated with the Elector Brandebourg at the taking of Stralsund from Sweden.

While they were forming the treaty of peace of Nimégue, these successes gave Georges-Guillaume for the time being a position of considerable political importance. Sweden being beaten, would not allow France, her victorious ally, to treat without assuring to herself the restitution of her provinces. The Duke de Zell was holding one of the most important. Louis XIV made him the object of his special attentions, and the Duke de Zell, feeling that the conditions of peace depended more than anything on the wishes of this all-powerful monarch, neglected nothing by which he could secure his good-will. For more than a year he formed the principal subject of Louis XIV's correspondence with his envoys.

Le Maréchal d'Estrades, French Ambassador at the Congress of Nimégue, was related to Eléonore. He profited by the occasion which

presented itself when he congratulated Eléonore on her restoration to health, to enter into such negotiations with her, subject to Louis XIV's approval, as resulted in making the Duke de Zell give way. From September 1676 to April 1677 the 'Demoiselle de Poitou' treated directly by letter with the Maréchal in the interest of the Duke de Zell and all the House of Brunswick. Her own and her husband's wish to be allied to the sovereign who was at that time the arbitrator of Europe did not make her lose sight of the interests he was pledged to protect. The Swedish Ambassadors at Nimégue were regularly informed of the proposition suggested by the Duchess de Zell. For a long time they persisted in declaring inadmissible the cession of the Duchy de Brême, insisted on by Georges-Guillaume.

For the meanwhile the foundation of an agreement was laid. In the course of the year 1677 to 1678 two French agents, MM. Bidal and de Grandchamp, came to Zell, instructed to secretly explore the ground. Gourville, who had made the acquaintance of the Duke de Brunswick during his exile in Holland, and had often visited them and been honoured by their esteem, received orders from Louis XIV to work with them. He

wrote also to the Duchess de Zell. The Duchess de Mecklembourg also went to the Court of Zell, as she had a certain amount of influence there. She endeavoured to excite Georges-Guillaume's mistrust for his allies, and encourage the good intentions which he had already shewn towards Louis XIV. Her presence at Zell served as a pretext for a French envoy to be sent there, as the hostilities between the two crowns had not ceased. Louis XIV selected for these negotiations Count de Rébénac, who though quite a young man, was endowed with considerable diplomatic ability. He arrived at Hambourg on the 10th of November 1678, and was ordered to do his utmost to make a treaty. He obtained permission to go to Zell in an unofficial character, ostensibly to present his addresses to the Duchess de Mecklembourg, whom he had known at the Court of France. It was by these means he gained his ends.

He received a warm reception at the Ducal Court, a few days after his arrival on the 23rd of November, and sent to inform Louis XIV that he had already succeeded in obtaining satisfactory interviews both with the two Duchesses and the Duke de Zell. Georges-Guillaume was

deeply irritated against his allies, they having cavilled with him about the possession of the Bishopric of Brême. 'Peste soit de ces marouffles ! . . . je ne veux jamais entendre parler d'eux ni de leur boutique !' It was in these terms that he designated those from whom they wished to separate him. One can easily imagine after this what kind of arguments the envoy of Louis XIV would urge, and he was not a man to neglect putting himself forward. The uselessness of seeking to increase a territory which would not belong to his children after him, since he had granted the succession to his nephews ; the advantage on the contrary which he would have if he accepted a sum of money which would benefit himself ; the interest which he would have in the sight of his ill-humoured relations, if he acquired in a durable manner the friendship of the powerful King of France for himself, his wife, and his daughter, etc., etc. 'Certainly one must acknowledge that Rébénac did his part well.' (*Rapport de Rébénac a Pomponne du 30 Novembre 1678.*)

He had only been three days at the Court of Zell when he wrote to Louis XIV, 'In the two days which I have spent here, the Duke de Zell, who accompanies all his actions and words with an

unequalled sincerity and frankness, has advanced a little further and does more than speak of things in general terms ; and I believe, sire, from the manner of his discourse, that I am not far wrong in saying that he wishes and intends to make amends to your Majesty. Madame la Duchess de Zell warmly supports your Majesty's interests ; and as her husband makes her the recipient of his confidences, it is more than likely his sentiments coincide with hers.' Such intentions rendered Count de Rébénac's mission easy.

During a month they negotiated in the most confidential terms, and on the 26th of January, Rébénac, Bernstorff, and Heimberg signed the treaty of Zell, which established peace with France. Georges-Guillaume gained the baillage de Sedinghausen and 300,000 crowns. The Duke de Zell, in spite of the perverse intentions which his sister-in-law never ceased to attribute to him, was pleased through the means of this agreement to shew his brother that he wished for a reconciliation, and had reserved for the Bishop of Osnabruck the right of profiting by this arrangement. A few days later Ernest-Auguste endorsed it. This was the first sign of the brothers being reconciled.

The time which succeeded the signing of peace and the elevation of Eléonore to the rank of Duchess was the most brilliant for the Court of Zell. The ducal coins were stamped with an effigy of Georges-Guillaume le Victorieux crowned with laurels. There were public rejoicings at Zell to commemorate the cessation of hostilities. Louis XIV sent splendid presents to the Duke and the Duchess. The sending of these presents gave rise to a very characteristic scene which was repeated in a letter from Count de Rébénac to Pomponne on the 4th of May, 1679. 'The Duchess Sophie, on hearing that Louis XIV intended sending a present to the Duchess de Zell, could not conceal her envy, and remarked before several persons that a *'bague de deux mille écus suffirait à une demoiselle de Poitou,'* this speech was repeated to the Duke and Duchess de Zell, and it annoyed them considerably. When Georges-Guillaume saw the diamonds which Louis XIV had sent to his wife, he said to Count de Rébénac : 'The King has given me more pleasure by this mark of affection to my wife, than if he had left me all Brême, or 500,000 crowns for myself. I feel more honoured at possessing a *'demoiselle de Poitou,'* who has received this

token of honour and good feeling from the King, than if I had the daughter of a king in name only.' The last words referred to the Duchess Sophie, daughter of the dethroned King of Bohemia.

This testimony of esteem and regard, from such a great and powerful monarch, considerably increased the prestige of the Court of Zell, and the Duke being pleased by the result of that policy in which Eléonore had so effectually assisted him, was more affectionate towards her than he had ever been before. This was the height of Eléonore's power. Rébénac wrote to Louis XIV on the 14th of May, 1679. 'The Duchess de Zell has more influence over her husband than ever, and although she has not interfered much with public affairs until recently, still I consider she was the means of procuring for your Majesty this alliance. It seems that the Duke is devoted to her, and consults her on every subject, in fact she has a considerable voice in all the councils.'

The act of the French monarch considerably improved the position of the representatives of the Court of Zell at foreign governments. In the spring of 1679, le Grand Maréchal de Thann, one of Eléonore's protégés, and one of the most brilliant

personages of her Court, went to Paris to congratulate Louis XIV, and to request of him that for the future the representatives of the Court of Zell should have the rank of Ambassadors. At this time the envoys of Zell were received not only by France, but by Germany, England, Denmark, and other important countries. When a diplomatist was accredited to the Dukes de Brunswick, he generally resided at Zell, near Georges-Guillaume. The reception which was accorded by Zell to the envoys of sovereigns was worthy of the traditions of the most brilliant courts, and whenever an envoy left Zell, the Duke invariably presented to him some of the magnificent horses with which his stables were filled.

Although his father had been simple and unaffected in his tastes, his sons loved luxury and ostentation.

Jean-Frédéric's Court was the strictest respecting etiquette, and probably the most scholarly and brilliant, but it was less luxurious than his brother's. Leibnitz lived there under the Prince's protection.

After Jean-Frédéric's death, in 1679, Ernest-Auguste succeeded to his possessions, and from that time there were only two courts, one at Zell

and the other at Hanover. Both Princes had similar tastes, and they tried to surpass one another in expenditure and display.

At the Court of Zell the French element predominated. During his travels the Duke had made several foreign friends. The Duchess was French, and her relatives from Poitou and Saintonge, who, like herself were Protestants, were obliged one after another to leave France owing to the vexations to which they were subjected. Where could they have found a safer refuge in their distress than with the Duke de Zell? The French nobility had at that period a well-merited renown for elegance and courtesy. The Duchess could not accustom herself to speak the German language with facility, and one finds even as late as 1685 in the '*Handschriftliche Lüneberger Chronike von Jacob Schomacker und Henricus Zegemann*' mention of an banquet given at Lunebourg, at which the Duchess apologizes to the superintendent of the Lutheran Church, because she could not understand all he said.

A contemporary writer, Grégoire Leti, has left us a detailed picture of the Court of Zell. He was a '*savant de cour*' who wanted assistance

from the great, and therefore cannot be looked on as an impartial narrator, for instance, he said, Georges-Guillaume and Eléonore were the most illustrious Prince and Princess of their time. One could not expect anything else from an author who at the period he wrote was receiving their hospitality. He was impressed by the fascinating picture of Eléonore and her grace in that Court which seemed made for her.

‘One sees in her the most perfect beauty of the body, united to the highest intellectual gifts, and a certain majesty in all her person allied to much gentleness, kindness, and modesty.’ And he added alluding to Eléonore’s birth: ‘May I be permitted to apply to this illustrious princess. that distinguished eulogy which Pliny wrote of the Emperor Trajan: *Virtus tua meruit imperium, sed addidit majestatis forma suffragium; illa præstitit ut oporteret te principem fieri, hæc ut deceret.*’

Then he spoke of the Court, ‘Here one sees much civility, honesty, and order, splendour and pomp. But the incomparable amiability of their Serene Highnesses who are so affectionate and devoted to one another, makes it extremely agreeable to all who see them. . . . If the three Courts of Zell, Wolfenbüttel and Hanover, which

belong to the same house were united, one can say, without flattery, that it would be one of the finest, the most magnificent, and superb courts in Europe. Each one of these Dukes who form the three branches of the House of Brunswick, has more than 500 horse or foot guards, very strong and well disciplined, besides other troops. Each one has more than twenty-five pages, and fifty lacqueys in superb liveries, and officers of all grades; the necessary adjuncts of a Court. The stables are full of valuable horses and magnificent carriages. In the towns are splendid palaces, and in the country princely residences. In fact, all that heart could desire to form a magnificent court is here.'

Georges-Christophe de Hammerstein was first Minister and 'Grand Bailli' de Zell. 'He is,' said Leti, 'a very distinguished gentleman, of great judgment and mature age. He executes his duties with punctilious exactitude, and they speak of him in a manner that does him honour.'

Then came the Minister Bernstorff, 'the eye of that Court.' The Prince intrusted him with all matters of importance concerning the interests of the States. 'He is seen oftener than anyone else in consultation with his Majesty. Everything

that is of weight and consequence he undertakes. He has a grave demeanour, he is useful and very agreeable, his acts are modest, and he is sincere, at least as much as the latter quality can be permitted to a State Minister. With visitors, he is politeness and honesty itself. He possesses profound knowledge and extraordinary capacity and experience.'

The General most seen, and who always represents the Prince at the head of the troops during the latter's absence is Jérémie Chauvet, a Frenchman. He was of lowly origin, some say a blacksmith's son. Chauvet had considerable energy, and after many campaigns in Portugal, in the Palatinate and in Germany, acquired great notoriety. He entered the service of the Duke Georges-Guillaume in 1670, and soon became chief of the armies, and as member of the privy council, he held a post of considerable importance at the Court of Zell. 'He is a soldier and a studious man,' (*Huomo di spada e cappa*) said Leti, 'very honest, civil and obliging, especially towards strangers. . . . He has qualities which make him universally appreciated, and he is esteemed and consulted by their Highnesses, and honoured by all the Court.'

‘Next we come to the learned and conciliating Fabricius, Minister of State and Vice-Chancellor, and the Grand Maréchal de Thann, also a minister. The latter has travelled a great deal, he is very clever and a book-worm. If civility and courtesy were gone out of this world, I believe,’ says Leti, ‘that there would be enough found in his heart to supply other men. Meanwhile he knows well how to distinguish the degrees of honesty due to each one, he is the true type of a grand maréchal. When it is needed he gives audience to strangers in a noble and courtly manner.’

These five personages composed the Council of State. Then came the secondary and honorary offices. Here, above all, French names abound. The Minister of Finance is Councillor de Hackelberg. Schütz is Commissary General of the troops. Some years later M. de Rosemont de Boucœur, who belonged to a family of French magistracy, also occupied the post of Privy Councillor. It is he who will be specially charged to treat for the interests of the Duchess in France. François de Beauregard, a French gentleman, is Major-General of the Militia. Coloned de Launay commands the regiment of the body-guard. General de Boisdavid is First Equerry, a post

which was lately held by Henri Desmier du Beignon, a step-brother of the Duchess, and who died of fever in 1675 after the campaign of Alsace. Two gentlemen of the name of 'du Boccage' figure equally at the Court, the one 'a cavalier of merit and experience, civil and full of kindness,' exercised the functions of First Groom of the Chamber, the other is colonel of dragoons in the Ducal Guard, 'short and good-looking, a brave soldier and fond of study.'

Two important offices in a Court where the sovereign is passionately fond of hunting, are those of Master of the Hounds and Master of the Woods and Forests. These are filled by MM. de Boisclair and de Staffhorst. M. de la Fortière is Grand Falconer. Amongst the different gentlemen of the chamber of the Duke de Zell, we read the following names, le Marquis de Suzannet de la Forest, le Baron de Caumont Montbeton, Henri de Pouguet de Faillac. The First Valet de Chambre of the Prince is an Italian named Casaroti from Venice.

As to the Court of the Duchess, it is entirely French. Doubtless Eléonore was wrong not to have treated with more consideration the feelings of the gentlemen of the country. However, from

1676 until 1722, the year of the death of the Duchess de Zell one does not see more than one or two German names amongst all those who surrounded her.

Le Grand Maréchal and First Gentleman of the Chamber is Armand de Lescours. 'It would be difficult,' says Leti, 'to find a gentleman more suited to this office than he . . . inclined to please where he can, a good friend, full of mirth, always showing a smiling face . . . he adapts himself to the genial nature of his Christian and kind-hearted mistress.'

As 'Chevaliers d'Honneur' and Gentlemen of the Court of the Duchess we see appear successively MM. de Malortie de Villars, du Virgier de Mouroy, de Vaux, du Vergier de Paisay, de Wittorf. Amongst all these names, the last only belonged to the German nobility.

As Ladies in Waiting, Eléonore had first her sister-in-law, the Marquise d'Olbreuze, while Mesdames de la Motte-Fouqué, de Beauregard, and the Marquise de la Roche-Giffard occupied the second places. Leti has left us his opinion of the First Maid of Honour, Mademoiselle Hélène de Lescours, 'Her grace, her conversation, her modest and prudent conduct, have won the esteem of all

the Court.' Next to her we find Mesdemoiselles de la Motte, de Charriard, de Maxüel de la Fortière, de Melville, et Sophie de Staffhorst; the two latter were with Eléonore until her death.

At the Court of Zell the Duke and Duchess prevented by their example those 'intrigues galantes' which were then considered a necessary and indispensable complement of Court life; in other respects, the existence they led was very similar to that of any other European Court at the latter part of the seventeenth century.

In the winter they had theatrical representations, ballets, balls, and concerts. Georges-Guillaume had always kept a company of French actors and Italian musicians. His castle at Zell was not rebuilt, the theatre which one sees there now was not finished at this time, and yet the Duke organised at his own home these costly amusements. In 1668, when the Queen of Sweden was at Hamburg, he sent his French actors over to play to her. The Ducal Court passed the same winter at Lunebourg with the Bishop and Madame d'Osnabruck. They had performances nearly every day. The balls took place generally at Georges-Guillaume's castle, or at his brother's, although they were occasionally

held at the Hotel de Ville, or at the residence of the minister Bülow. Once they had a fancy dress ball, which was a novelty in Germany ; Georges-Guillaume appeared as a Spaniard, and the Duchess Sophie as a shepherdess.

These rejoicings took place most frequently at Zell. When once peace was established between Zell and Hanover the entire Courts exchanged visits. Jean-Frédéric before his death, competed also with his two brothers. The company of French actors which numbered twenty-four was supported by the three dukes, the actors spent four months in every year with them alternately.

The Hanoverian Court was quite different from that of Zell, being most dissolute and profligate. The masked balls at Hanover attracted from afar all the German princes and lords who were lovers of pleasure. Then the whole town was *en fête*. They danced at the Castle and the Hôtel de Ville, every one being masked. Gaming tables were the fashion. The neighbouring princes arrived unattended, and being masked they could mix with the crowd and amuse themselves without being recognised. Men and women behaved themselves in a manner that was

a 'great scandal to the powerless clergy.' This served to revive throughout all Germany those carnivals of Venice, amusements which the two Dukes had for years passionately enjoyed. To put a finishing touch to the illusion, Italian servants served refreshments in their own style.

Another time they had plays, when the songs were worthy of the 'Soupers de la Régence.' There dukes and princesses did not mind associating with savants like Leibnitz, or with princes' mistresses such as Mélusine de Schulembourg and Madame de Kielmansegge.

In the summer they continued these amusements in the open air. There one saw in the gardens designed *à la Française* at Hanover and Zell, the walking toilettes copied from the Court of Versailles. Every year they went to take the waters at Pyrmont, Wiesbaden and Rehburg, and when house accommodation was insufficient, they lived in sumptuous tents.

The princely visits afforded another opportunity for display and luxury. The Queen Christine of Sweden, the Princess Wilhelmine-Augustine, and the Prince George of Denmark, the Duke de Lauenbourg, William of Orange, the Prince of Wolfenbüttel, the Landgrave of Hesse,

the Duke de Holstein-Ploen, the Duchess de Mecklembourg, the Prince Electoral and the princess Electorale de Brandebourg ; all came in turn to visit the Duke de Zell. Then they had fireworks, and the town was illuminated. Processions were arranged to meet the principal guests, and accompany them on their departure. Cannons were fired from the ramparts, and reviews of the Ducal troops were held by the princes.

It was, no doubt, an occasion of this sort which brought to Zell Henri V de Reuss, member of one of the reigning houses of Germany. Eléonore's eldest sister, Angélique Desmier d'Olbreuze made a conquest of this great lord, who was neither handsome nor fascinating. Like Georges-Guillaume, he ignored the inferiority of her birth, and consented to marry her. It was not a happy *ménage*, and did not last long. At the end of a few years they were separated, and the Countess de Reuss died on the 6th of November, 1688. A few days before her death, the envoy of the Elector de Brandebourg arrived at Zell and witnessed the grief which her last moments caused to the Duchess, Georges-Guillaume, and all her relatives and friends about the Court.

Hunting was Georges-Guillaume's favourite

pastime. The master of coursing, the master of hounds, and the falconer whose names we have already mentioned, had enough to do to arrange places for each day's sport so as to meet the wishes of the Duke. Wienhausen, Gifhorn, Weyhausen, la Goehrde, Bruchhausen, Ebstorf and the most inaccessible parts of that desolate country of Zell, were amongst them. At this period much of the country was entirely covered with brushwood and forest, where hunting and shooting boxes were constructed. At Radbruch, near Lunebourg, they created a stud; at Zell they built stables large enough to hold more than a hundred horses, dog kennels, and a riding school. When they went stag hunting to Ebstorf, the Prince accepted hospitality for himself and his suite from the ladies of the convent. On the banks of the Aller they lay in wait for the heron. The Duke often passed whole weeks at Wienhausen with Eléonore. Accustomed from her youth to field sports, and coursing at Poitou, the Duchess accompanied her husband, in spite of her delicate health and the hardships of the journey. When dying, the Duke left her the little castle at Wienhausen, where they had spent such happy days together far from their court and almost alone.

A traveller who stayed at Zell a short time after Georges-Guillaume's death, remarks upon the curiosities, objects d'art, etc., with which the place was stocked, and he has left us a minute description of the resources of the Court. The dogs numbered over 400. A Frenchman looked after the kennels reserved for the hounds. Close by were located the wolf-dogs used for German hunting. A little further on were the Ducal pheasantries. At the gates of Zell at 'l'Endtenfang' on the borders of a little lake, they reared with greatest care the 'canards d'appel' which served them for sport in the fens.

More than balls or comedies, hunting at the Court of Zell was the principal attraction. Georges-Guillaume knew it well, and it was here he received his most illustrious visitors. During the autumn of 1685 the hunting at la Gœhrde served as a pretext for the Duke de Zell to carry on important negotiations which he wished kept secret. On the 10th of September 1685, unaccompanied by a numerous suite the Grand Maréchal de Thann, Danish minister, arrived at Lunebourg. After visiting the principal inhabitants of the town he went to la Gœhrde, where in a small hunting box he was joined by the envoys

of the Emperor and of the Electors de Brandebourg, Hesse, and of Wolfenbüttel. Thus in the centre of the forest negotiations were carried on for nearly two months, which resulted in several German Courts joining the league of Augsburg formed against Louis XIV. The Duke and Duchess made a triumphal entry into Lunebourg on the 21st of November, and the chronicler mentions their amusing conversation during a banquet given to the French minister, whom they puzzled by their mysterious hints.

The amusements at Court did not cause the Duke to neglect the affairs of the State, for since his marriage with Eléonore he was much more attached to his country, and he was now constantly reminded of his duties as a sovereign either by his wife or his ambitious brother. In the '*Avanture Historique*' one finds 'the Duchess possessed sufficient judgment and information to enable her to take part in public affairs, and she could converse readily with the greatest ministers of her time. Everything she undertook was carried through so successfully, that the Prince attempted nothing without her advice. Even sovereigns condescended to ask her to exert her influence in their favour.'

History is often ungrateful, and the traces of female influence are easily lost ; woman's actions are sometimes not discernible and yet in many cases they are decisive. In a worldly century like the seventeenth woman's influence was considerable. The effect of the Duchess de Zell's ascendancy over those by whom she was surrounded is not easy to prove, although the correspondence of several persons of this period and the accounts of the envoys of Louis XIV at the Court of Brunswick, give us a very good idea of the important part she played in the affairs of her time.

We have seen that she assisted at the formation of the treaty which preceded the Peace of Zell. During the years which followed until the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, she upheld France. At first the task was an easy one. Louis XIV was feared, it is true, but up to that time several German princes congratulated themselves on being allied to him. However, the work of the 'Chambres de Réunion' and the entry of French troops into Strasbourg, produced the effect of a menace on the greater part of the German Courts, and in consequence of this the Duchess wavered in her policy. William of Orange who

neglected no opportunity of adding another ally to his cause against France, had now less difficulty in getting the smaller German Courts to give him their support. The Emperor at this time was hard pressed by the Turks, who were encamped round the walls of Vienna, and was therefore incapable of a serious effort against France.

From 1681 until 1686 the Court of Zell was the object of constant solicitations on the part of the enemies of Louis XIV. The King was informed of everything by the Marquis d'Arcy (who had succeeded the Count de Rébénac), and afterwards by M. de Bourgeauville, and he endeavoured by a hundred means to counterbalance the rival influence. In 1681 he sent a magnificent sword, the hilt of which was studded with diamonds, to the Duke de Zell. The same year Gourville went to Hanover and Zell on a secret mission. In 1682 Louis XIV wrote to the Duchess de Zell and reminded her of his esteem and affection, doubtless intending by this mark of affection to regain her interest on his behalf.

But notwithstanding all this Louis XIV lost ground in Zell. After long negotiations, which we shall detail in greater length by-and-by, Sophie-Dorothée was married to the eldest son

of Ernest-Auguste in 1682. This union was arranged three years previous to its occurrence. D'Arcy understood well that it would be prejudicial to the French interests. Ernest-Auguste became Duke of Hanover in 1679 by the death of his brother the Duke Jean-Frédéric. On the 23d of April 1681, d'Arcy wrote to Louis XIV, 'If M. le duc de Hanover continues to assert his reluctance to enter into an alliance with your Majesty, it is easy to foresee that once the alliance between the Princess de Zell and the eldest Prince de Hanover has taken place, the Duke de Zell will be entirely influenced by his brother, for whom he entertains great affection. Although he is very fond of his daughter, he also loves his own pleasures, and he will resign the care of his affairs to his brother when the marriage is over.'

This is in reality what happened. The act which united the two brothers had only just been accomplished when d'Arcy felt he had no further influence with Georges-Guillaume.

In June 1683 he announced to Louis XIV that the Duke Ernest-Auguste, had signed an agreement with the Emperor, who in exchange for a treaty of subsidies, had promised to insure to

the Duke's house the Bishopric d'Osnabruck, and to create his eldest son Elector, when he represented the States of Zell and Hanover. A few days afterwards he added, 'the Duke de Zell still feels reluctant to detach himself from your Majesty, but the engagements which his brother has undertaken will unite all the princes of Brunswick in the same interests, and perhaps it is an affair already accomplished.' The truce of Ratisbonne, signed on the 15th of August 1684 calmed for a time the quarrelsome spirit of the Dukes de Brunswick.

The revocation of the Edict of Nantes, and the hardships which the Protestants endured in consequence, furnished William of Orange with a pretext to foster discontent against France, and at the same time was the means of procuring him new allies. Ernest-Auguste was too firm and too politic to allow himself to be led away by these considerations. He was determined to derive a profit from everything, and to make the Emperor pay dearly. By putting forward scruples and adopting a hesitating course he obtained the much coveted title of Elector.

The conduct of Louis XIV at the time of the

Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, caused the Duke de Zell to join the Prince of Orange.

For years Georges-Guillaume had supported a representative in Paris. This agent was M. de Rosemount de Boucœur, a Frenchman and a Protestant. In 1684, foreseeing the Revocation of the Edict, and therefore the necessity of strengthening his claims on the Court of Zell to insure his own safety, Boucœur came to Zell, and prior to his return to France received the official title of 'Conseiller Intime' of the Ducal Court. The following year his fears were realised. Boucœur and all his relations were staunch Protestants, and therefore were amongst the first to be persecuted. In October, 1685, the Duke de Zell interposed diplomatically with Louis XIV, not only for Boucœur and all his family, but also for several relatives of the Duchess, with a view to their being permitted to sell their property and leave France. He was refused; and Boucœur relying on his diplomatic immunities openly defied the new Edict, whereupon Louis XIV, influenced by Louvois, had Boucœur imprisoned in the Bastille. This was during the winter of 1686. Georges-Guillaume insisted on his being immediately set at liberty,

and the King haughtily replied that a strict treaty of alliance would be the price. No doubt he intended to intimidate the Duke de Zell and force him into accepting his terms, but this was not the way to gain the proud prince of Guelph.

Eléonore also deeply resented this indignity. Her relatives were not in safety. From this time Georges-Guillaume took his side. In vain Gourville's nephew, Jean de Gourville, was sent in 1687 and 1688 to make a last effort at the Court of Brunswick. He could only confirm to the King the engagements made between the Duke de Zell and William of Orange, and Eléonore's zeal for the Protestant party. The Duchess haughtily and openly expressed her indignation and rage. Bourgeauville wrote to the King on the 20th of October, 1688 :—'The Duchess is a firm supporter of the religion which she professes, and she influences the Duke by her own sentiments.' This was when the rupture was about to be officially announced. And a few days later Bourgeauville wrote again :—'The Duke de Zell has gone as far as to say in speaking of your Majesty, that a prince who does not keep his word to his subjects, gives them the right to seek a new master. . . . This has more to do

with the suggestions of the Duchess than his own inclinations.'

In January 1689, war being declared, Bourgeauville left Zell. Prior to this rupture, and at the time these negotiations were pending, an incident, of which the consequences threatened to be considerable, took place, and led to a correspondence between the Duchess and the Prince Electoral de Brandebourg. This correspondence has since been found in the State Records of Berlin. We will quote from it presently to show clearly the part which Eléonore took in politics.

The restless and divided citizens of Hambourg were then unceasingly agitated by foreign agents, secret emissaries of Sweden or Denmark, interested in creating disturbances. In 1686 Georges-Guillaume had reason to complain of his noisy neighbours, and called out his troops against the town. This gave umbrage to Berlin, and it was to the Duchess Eléonore that the Prince Electoral addressed himself in February 1686, 'I fear bad consequences from this Hamburg affair, a result I did not expect after the assurances of the Duke. . . . He will get no help from me if all is not settled soon. Aid this by all the means in your power, and believe me it is the best service

your Highness can render to the public and to me.'

The Duchess de Zell replied on the 26th of February as a guarantee for her husband, 'I should be very sorry if your Highness believed that M. le Duc had broken his word. He is above it. . . . He will do nothing against the town, and will be friendly towards it as he has ever been, as soon as some reparation is made for the insult which he has received. He says that your Highness is too just to condemn him, and that you will not endeavour to procure him this satisfaction. For myself, sire, I wish the affair was settled to everyone's satisfaction, thus proving to your Highness that I am his humble servant.'

A letter written on the 16th of March 1686 from Berlin, shows that the assurances tendered by the Duchess de Zell, calmed the apprehensions of the Electoral Court.

A few years later the intervention of the Duchess will again be of importance to regulate the question of succession to the throne of England, in the House of Brunswick.

The revocation of the Edict of Nantes, contributed towards extending Eléonore's influence at the Court of Zell. It is well known what a

generous reception was accorded to the French Protestant refugees in Holland, Geneva, England, and in several parts of Germany. At Zell, Hanover, and Holland, the Duchess displayed great zeal in favour of these unfortunates, and entire families were indebted to her for unexpected blessings.

Her piety and her deep attachment to the religion in which she had been brought up, had never ceased, so that in reality the persecution only increased her ardour. Before the revocation of the Edict, she was much distressed by the proceedings taken against her co-religionists, and she invited a French clergyman, M. de la Forest, to come to Zell. At first, he held religious service in the Duchess's apartments, but the number who attended being very considerable, she obtained from Georges-Guillaume a kind of repetition of the Edict of Nantes, granting permission to the refugees to establish churches in Zell and Lunebourg. The Grand Elector accorded them similar privileges, and after that the Huguenots flocked to Prussia and the Duchy of Brunswick.

This reformation in France was caused as much by a re-action against the dissolute manners of the Court, as by religious conviction. The

persecution only strengthened these sentiments in people who were driven out of the country. The arrival of exiles at the Court of Zell contributed still further towards the maintenance of that strict etiquette which was observed there.

Thus, thanks to Eléonore's interference, no prince harboured a greater number of exiles than Georges-Guillaume. In the army, which was one of the best in Germany, and also at his Court the French preponderated. The good-natured Duke often invited some of these strangers who were now become his subjects to his Court. A story is told that one day at dinner when all his guests were Frenchmen, and one of them, encouraged by Georges-Guillaume's affability laughingly remarked to him, 'We could say Monseigneur that you are the only foreigner present.' This speech was repeated, and it has since then gone the round of Germany, to be appropriated and misapplied by adventurers, unworthy imitators of Voltaire, who came in the next century to seek their fortunes on the other side of the Rhine. We cannot express it in other terms than a gratuitous insult to associate with this anecdote in its perverted rendering the names of Chevalier Riccant de la Marlinière, the companion of

Schomberg, and of Ruvigny, and the ancestors of Ancillon, of Lestocq, Lamotte-Fouqué, Savigny Malortie, de la Chevalerie, Jonquières, Beaulieu-Marconnay, and several others, who always expressed the warmest attachment to their adopted country.

The enmity of races had not then been systematically taken advantage of as it has been since, although several Germans took umbrage because there were so many foreigners at the Court of Zell. It has been impossible to discover any indication that Georges-Guillaume was influenced by this state of things, and history has not preserved a remembrance of any intrigue instigated by these refugees, with intent to injure the country they served. The Duke's politics were always national, and his conduct too upright for anyone to suppose for an instant that he intended to desert the Empire's cause. On the 3rd of September, 1675, he wrote to the Count de Waldeck, 'I am astonished that there is anyone capable of taking offence because there are so many French persons at my Court. I think I have proved by my past conduct that they have not prevented me from defending the common interests of the Empire.'

The Court of Zell acquired many advantages in the improvement of art and science, through its welcome to the French refugees. Both the Duke and the Duchess were fond of literature. Georges-Guillaume spoke French and Italian fluently, and had gained extensive knowledge through so much travelling. Some literary essays that were dedicated to him, prove that he was not an enemy to *belles-lettres*.

The Duchess took more interest in serious questions, and the correspondence of Leibnitz with Bossuet and Pelisson shows us that she followed the polemics of the Bishop of Meaux and Molanus, and that she was one of the first to read 'L'Histoire des Variations' in German.

Therefore it was a common saying that if one wanted to succeed at the Court of Zell, one needed to be a soldier, a sportsman, and a musician. The revocation brought men really distinguished in art and letters to Zell. For instance we can name Chevalier, the clever engraver, who has left us several admirable numismatic works, and the Museum of the Guelphs at Herrenhausen near Hanover, possesses two portraits by him. They are engraved on ivory, the subjects being the Duke and Duchess de Zell,

date 1668. Then there were the two Chapuzeaus, father and son. The first, one of the most indefatigable writers of his time, was taken up by the Duchess, and received, 1682, the post of 'Gouverneur des Pages de la Cour de Zell.' His son was Georges-Guillaume's private secretary, and his attachment towards the Duchess and her daughter will console them in the sad future that awaits them.

CHAPTER VI

SOPHIE-DOROTHÉE

THE marriage of the Duke de Zell and Madame d'Harbourg had broken the bond of affection which until then had united Georges-Guillaume and Ernest-Auguste. Irritated by his sister-in-law's reproaches, influenced by the persuasions of the Duke Antoine-Ulric and Baron de Schütz, who convinced him that to insure the safety of Eléonore and her child, his marriage with her was an absolute necessity, the Duke decided to accomplish this act which so deeply wounded the Court of Osnabruck. But this rupture was a great sacrifice to him. Upright and honourable, attached to his brother since their infancy,

anxious for the welfare of the woman he loved and her child, Georges-Guillaume was very uneasy about the future. If he died, what would be the fate of those whom he left alone and unprotected in the power of a prince who had never liked them and who would then be the legal master of his dominions.

His brother, influenced by the Duchess Sophie's violent rage and scorn separated from him ; but it is easy to foresee that the time will come when the estrangement will weigh heavily on him also, for he was sincerely attached to generous, kind hearted Georges-Guillaume. Then political interest dictated to him that it would be wise not to be guided by affection or spite, but to make a movement towards his brother, for Georges-Guillaume would let himself be guided by him, where as if he were away from him, he would be the tool of some ambitious minister, and should Eléonore have a son, Georges-Guillaume would, if forsaken by all his family, probably annul the engagement he had made respecting his succession.

Sophie alone seems to have tranquilly accepted the situation, which dispensed with the necessity of her associating with her sister-in-law,

and what she ironically termed, 'Georges-Guillaume's sweet family.'

An unlooked for event greatly modified these sentiments.

The young prince, de Wolfenbüttel, being obliged to wait for several years before he could be married, left his *fiancée* and took command of a regiment in the Imperial armies. He was killed by a musket shot at the siege of Philippsbourg, on the 22nd of August, 1676. Sophie-Dorothée was not quite ten years' old when her intended husband died.

From this time it was clearly seen that Eléonore's daughter would ere long hold her own amongst the most beautiful. Already this happy and intellectual child possessed those gifts which at the early age of ten obtained for her this brilliant description.

'She has auburn hair, an oval face, a little dimple in her chin, and a lovely complexion. She dances divinely, plays the harpsichord, and sings well. She has a deal of wit and vivacity, and she has profited by her studies. She has naturally good taste, which is increased by the care they have taken with her education. She possesses more general knowledge than many men. She

speaks well, and enters minutely into all that is said to her, and her answers are full of intelligence.'

As the Duchess d'Orléans and the Electress Sophie were convinced that the mother was destined to marry a valet, it is not likely they would find the daughter suited to their taste. It was hard for them to criticise the outward charms of that lovely young girl, those brilliant dark eyes, that delicate mouth, that perfect complexion, of which the artists of the time have left us an exquisite picture. This description is not given in the '*Correspondance de Madame La Duchesse d'Orléans*,' but we hear other things, viz., 'She was badly brought up, she had adventures in her youth, at ten years old she had court made to her.'

We have found nothing that justified these remarks. Eléonore was born and brought up in a tranquil province, surrounded by austere and persecuted Protestant relatives. She had preserved her spotless reputation in all the Courts at which she lived. Later on a brilliant position was offered her. She, poor girl, after a hard struggle, accepted what fortune brought her. Nothing in her past nor in her whole life could

lead any one to suppose that she neglected the child whom she and Georges-Guillaume adored.

It is true, perhaps, that the child was not perfect according to Sophie's ideal. The Duchess d'Osnabruck never mentioned God to her daughter, until she was thirteen, thinking it would be time enough to instruct her in religion when she was made acquainted with the faith of the future husband of the girl. No doubt Sophie-Dorothée was baptized and religiously brought up; although quite a child she could understand the tender affection of her parents. She had a heart; she wanted to be loved. She was not like the inanimate being longed for by the Duchess d'Orléans, a cold statue, destined to take her place on a throne, to receive the incense of mortals, and be above the sentiments which are the essence of the human soul.

Excepting this we believe there was nothing to reproach her with. Her education had received more careful attention than that of any other princess of her time. To be convinced of this one has only to read her correspondence in German and French, her correct orthography and elegant writing, which accomplishments were very rare at that period even among the highest.

‘Georges-Guillaume is having the talents of Sophie-Dorothée highly cultivated, and her many virtues endear her to her parents.’ The above is an answer given by the Bishop of Osnabruck to his councillors when they questioned him on the subject of his brother’s marriage. Then Bidal wrote to Louis XIV, on the 14th of August 1677, ‘The Princess de Zell is well grown and well brought up.’ Rébénac declared her one of the most accomplished princesses in Europe. Leti, another witness, speaks with enthusiasm of the ‘charming qualities of mind and body of the young princess, and of the many virtues which education or nature had combined in her.’ Later on after the catastrophe of which Sophie-Dorothée will be the victim, the father of her first *fiancé* wrote to the Duchess Eleonore to console her, and expressed himself in the following terms respecting the lady who would have been his daughter-in-law, ‘I cannot realize that any base design could enter into the heart of a young girl so well born, and brought up with such care, and one whom I know possesses an extremely good disposition.’ (The above is an extract from a letter from the Duke Antoine-Ulric).

We therefore think one must consider as inventions the story of the Valet de Chambre Colin, and also the wicked speeches made by the Electress Sophie and the Duchess d'Orléans respecting Sophie-Dorothée's education.

Such a fascinating princess, who was at the same time one of the richest heiresses in the Empire, could not fail to be sought after, notwithstanding her origin, by many German princes. When William of Orange was informed of Sophie-Dorothée's successes, he wrote to the Count de Waldeck:—'I see that in our century money surpasses every other consideration.'

In spite of these conscientious alarms, the Prince de Wolfenbüttel had only been dead a few months when the Amsterdam newspapers announced Sophie - Dorothée's marriage with Prince George of Denmark. They also spoke of the Prince of Wolfenbüttel's younger brother as a probable suitor. At the beginning of the year 1679 the Count de Rébénac, French Minister at the Court of Zell, was commissioned to ask Georges-Guillaume whether the hereditary Prince of Sweden would be acceptable to him as a son-in-law.

In the course of the same year a little

pamphlet was published, entitled ' *Avanture Historique écrite par l'ordre de Madame * * **.' Under assumed names, and in the form of a romance, the Duchess de Zell's life was told, and they left it to be understood that she had decided on her daughter's marriage with Prince Auguste-Frédéric, de Wolfenbüttel's younger brother. We should be inclined to think that this publication was an inspiration of some one connected with the Court, it was written in double text, German and French, and was destined to occupy the attention of Germany.

At Osnabruck they began to feel frightened. The intercourse between de Wolfenbüttel and his cousin was becoming strained, as the former unmasked Ernest-Auguste's ambitious projects. The renunciation which the Bishop had obtained from his elder brother had become known to him. He knew that the younger upstart had decided to establish the succession by order of primogeniture in his States, and for this reason he had prevailed on the Emperor to grant him the dignity of Elector.

What would become of all these castles in the air, if Georges-Guillaume, who was always at variance with his brother, and having no son,

should give his daughter in marriage to the Prince de Wolfenbüttel, and the latter would insist on his wife's claim to the inheritance? The history of the House of Brunswick has given examples of war being declared to defend more solid claims than those granted by the Duke de Zell's renunciation. These were no doubt the thoughts and fears which predominated at the Episcopal Court of Osnabruck, when from Zell, Ernest-Auguste received the offer of the hand of Sophie-Dorothée for his eldest son Georges-Louis.

Although the advantages of this alliance would be considerable to Osnabruck, Georges-Guillaume thought at first he would make a monetary concession also, so he offered to Ernest-Auguste 50,000 crowns a-year and 100,000 crowns in ready money. On the 20th of June 1679, the Duchess Sophie wrote and explained this to her brother, adding at the same time, 'The boy has a dislike to the marriage and we do not care for an alliance with the Olbreuze; besides the girl is a child twice legitimized. So taking all things into consideration we think if Georges-Guillaume wishes to marry his daughter to our eldest son he will have to increase the

sum he proposes for her dowry. What do you say to his giving 80,000 crowns annually ?'

There were many arguments on both sides in favour of this marriage. It would assure Eléonore and her daughter's future, and seal the reconciliation between the brothers in a lasting manner, also it would decide the question of succession amicably, and complete the territorial union so ardently desired. No doubt the Duke de Zell showed too clearly his eagerness to arrange it, for the Duke Ernest-Auguste saw that he would gain by protracting the negotiations. Again Sophie wrote to her brother, on the 9th of November, 'It is a hard pill to swallow, but if they will gild it with 100,000 crowns a-year, one might shut one's eyes and take it. . . . My six sons are growing up. Ernest-Auguste is ailing, and he would like to secure the succession and have rest from anxiety. For myself, I dislike the whole affair.'

In the meanwhile, the Duke Jean-Frédéric died on December 18th, 1679. He had no son, therefore, according to the Duke George's will, and the agreement of 1665, his States came to the Bishop of Osnabruck. Thus the ambitious younger brother was richer than the elder, since

part of Hanover and of Grubenhagen, that is to say, the parts belonging to the house of Lunebourg were now added to his Bishopric. All tended to further his plans, it only rested with him to seal an agreement with the Court of Zell, but unfortunately the brothers were not on friendly terms, so Ernest-Auguste decided to bring about a reconciliation at any price.

They consulted the principal jurists of the time. William of Orange, who was an old and faithful friend of the Dukes de Brunswick, was asked to give his advice. He persuaded them to acknowledge the Duchess Eléonore; and Louis XIV, believing that it would be to his interest to encourage this marriage, sent instructions to the Marquis d'Arcy to assist the projected union between Sophie-Dorothée and the Prince George-Louis. The first agreement was signed on the 13th of July, 1680. The brothers were once more united. And they could continue the negotiations and fix the price for this *mésalliance*.

Then, little by little the old relationship was gradually established between the two Courts. It was a beginning of the frequent visits and brilliant *fêtes* which we described in the last chapter. Georges-Guillaume, in his joy at the

reconciliation was oblivious of the old dissensions, and Ernest-Auguste exercised if anything more sway over his brother than formerly. Leibnitz called them 'Ein fürstliches Dioskuren Paar.' The Duchess Sophie, modified her conduct towards her sister-in-law, and in April 1681, the Duchess de Zell confided to the Marquis d'Arcy that 'for some time she had been treated with civility and had received tokens of esteem from the Duchess of Hanover.'

Several times, however, it was thought the negotiations respecting the marriage were entirely ended, as the Duke of Hanover's demands were so enormous, and Georges-Guillaume held his purse strings tightly.

In the spring of 1681 the two parties were again together, but neither liked to renew overtures after the last fruitless attempt. Gourville came to Zell to try to preserve the alliance between Louis XIV and the Duke of Brunswick, which the latter had cancelled when the doings of the 'Chambres de Réunion' were made known in Germany. In his Memoirs he explains that he took an active part in the negotiations which preceded Sophie-Dorothée's marriage, but it was not so. This is how he reported to Louis XIV the

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application which the Duke and Duchess de Zell made to him to entreat him to further the match between their daughter and the Prince of Hanover. 'Both together and separately they informed me of all that had taken place between themselves and the Duke and Duchess of Hanover, and said they had often wished for my presence in this country to act as a mediator between them, and they declared to me that they were exceedingly anxious for a really sincere reconciliation with the Court of Hanover, in view of this marriage. . . . They also said that the Duchess of Hanover was opposed to their wishes, and that I must be careful in explaining their sentiments to her, and all that I say to her on the subject ought not to come from them, but be entirely influenced by my own esteem for the two Courts.'

Gourville errs in his Memoirs when he lets it be understood that the marriage was due to his influence with the Dukes of Brunswick. The fact is that the negotiations entered into in the year 1681 resulted in nothing.

In April, 1682, the Court of Hanover having heard that the Prince of Nassau was another rival, and would in all probability be accepted,

made another attempt to come to terms with Georges-Guillaume through the intervention of the Minister Hammerstein, who was devoted to the interests of the House of Hanover. But the Duke Ernst-Auguste's claims were too exorbitant. Notwithstanding his great desire for this marriage, the Prince de Zell refused to give his daughter as a dowry the County d'Hoya, which was worth more than 200,000 crowns a-year, and also to put his troops at the Duke of Hanover's disposal. These were the proposals he made through Hammerstein.

Forewarned by the Marquis D'Arcy that Sophie-Dorothée's marriage would result in the Duke de Zell being entirely influenced by his brother, Louis XIV, in the second stage of the negotiations, declined to further the union. He authorised his agents to say that his only wish on the subject was to see the young princess married according to her parents' wish.

As for Eléonore, at first she wanted a French alliance for her daughter — to the Count de Soissons for instance—then she earnestly desired the Prince of Nassau for a son-in-law, although to please her husband she gradually tried to

overcome her dislike to this marriage which would unite the houses of Brunswick.

In the midst of all this hesitation, the claims of other suitors were contemplated. During the summer of 1682 several really believed that the Prince of Nassau would be accepted. In the first week of September he had sent to France for clothes, and to Amsterdam for jewels. His illusions did not last long. The summer of 1682 was not lost time for the Duke of Hanover.

After refusing so many times he ended by being himself the supplicator. Towards the middle of August the Duke de Zell and his wife stayed for some days at Hanover, where they were subjected to the most pressing solicitations. The following account is taken from D'Arcy's letter to Louis XIV, on the 28th of August.

'The negotiations for the marriage between the eldest Prince of Hanover and the Princess de Zell have been warmly carried on by their Royal Highnesses. The Duchess de Zell informed me of the principal particulars on her return to Zell. It seems that the Duke of Hanover has been closeted with the Duke de Zell for five or six hours every day, trying hard to make him consent to his proposals. The Duke and Duchess

of Hanover and the Countess de Reuss have had endless interviews with the Prince on this subject. And their anxiety to conclude the affair, and prevent the young Princess from marrying the Prince of Nassau, has been so considerable, that the Duchess of Hanover got up three times in the middle of one night to come to the Duchess de Zell's bedside to talk to her. . . . After dinner on the evening before their departure the Duke of Hanover was employed with his first Minister, the Baron de Platen, composing the clauses and conditions of the marriage ; this document he gave to the Duke de Zell when he was leaving Hanover, in order that the latter might examine it carefully on his return to Zell. The Duchess de Zell dreads this marriage which will make her dependent on the House of Hanover, she feels that they do not like her, and will influence her husband against her. She has not disguised from me that she intends doing all in her power to prevent it. She told me the marriage would be either completed or broken off entirely in eight or ten days.'

In a place situated half-way between the two capitals, the Dukes of Zell and Hanover met, each was accompanied by his ministers, and for

four days worked hard to complete the arrangements.

On the 11th of September, the Duchess Sophie was still ignorant of the result. She wrote to M. de Bussche, the Duke Ernest-Auguste's envoy at Vienna. 'They are still negotiating here, and I thought I should have been enabled to tell you something of importance, but when one makes great demands on one side, and does not want to give much on the other, a long time elapses in coming to a conclusion, and I do not yet know what the end will be.'

Finally, Ernest-Auguste being greatly in need of money, modified his demands a little, and Georges-Guillaume accepted them. D'Arcy immediately informed Louis XIV:

'Sire, the marriage of the Princess de Hanover and the eldest Prince of Hanover was determined on yesterday evening. The day before M. de Platen arrived from Hanover very late in the evening, after three couriers had announced his intended arrival, and on the following day amicably settled the affair with the Duke de Zell's ministers. On the same evening, the Prince seeing that the Court was anxious to know the result of the negotiations, drew me aside with the Duchess, and

told me that the arrangements for the marriage were completed ; they made the communication in confidence, because I am your Majesty's Minister and their sincere friend. They do not intend to publicly announce it just yet. . . . Since then, the Duchess has told me that the reason why she ceased opposing the negotiations lately, was, because de Villiers (who was instructed to negotiate the marriage with the Prince of Nassau), had not obtained the provinces of Frise and Groningue—which was all they had asked of him—and that without them the Duke de Zell would never consent to his daughter's marriage with the Prince of Nassau. But in reality, she disliked the present match as much as ever.'

D'Arcy, to whom the Duchess de Zell often opened her heart, was perhaps the only one who really knew her regrets, and he was only informed of them in strict confidence.

'I imitate the Duchess in her pretended joy,' he wrote to Louis XIV. Eléonore took good care not to let her uneasiness appear. Even to her own nearest relations she pretended she was perfectly satisfied.

She wrote to her brother, M. d'Olbreuze, on the 8th of October, 'At last my daughter is

engaged to one of the handsomest and richest princes in Germany, he is the Duke of Hanover's heir, and my husband's nephew. As my daughter could not possibly make a more advantageous alliance, I am sure you can understand how glad I am that it is settled.'

The act which concluded the conditions of the marriage was signed on the 24th of October. The young Princess brought the dowry, which was enriched by many endowments, of which she and her mother had been the recipients. The Duke of Hanover withdrew his scruples on the subject of honour, and consented to receive a rent of 50,000 crowns annually, a sum of 150,000 crowns payable in six years, and to his brother surrendering in his favour certain subsidies, which were made to him by Holland and Spain after the last war.

These were the prosaic negotiations which preceded the marriage of Georges-Louis and Sophie-Dorothée. We think we have expatiated enough on this point, to scatter in good faith the fables which have been accepted and circulated even by respectable historians. Regarding the union of these two youthful hearts a single question was sordidly discussed—on one side how

much would be gained by an alliance with the rich heiress, on the other how much ought to be paid to efface the scorn which 'the twice legitimized child' and 'the daughter of a parvenue' inspired.

The marriage took place at Zell on the 2nd of December 1682, at ten o'clock in the evening. D'Arcy wrote to Louis XIV, 'There was no joyful celebration; scarcely anyone knew about it; the night before last after their Highnesses of Zell and Hanover had supped according to their usual custom, and with the same people as on the preceding evening, they retired to their apartments at ten o'clock, from there they adjourned to the apartments of the Princess de Zell, and a minister was sent for; the marriage then took place in the presence of their Highnesses of Zell and Hanover, and Messieurs de Podewils and Chauvet their Lieutenant-Generals who were ordered secretly to be present. . . . Yesterday there was a kind of combined opera and ballet by way of a marriage rejoicing, and to-day I believe they intend having some illuminations and fireworks.' A sad wedding, although Leibnitz in his verses composed for the occasion extols the charms and the 'divine beauty which conquered Prince George's heart.'

On the 19th of December, the Prince and Princess returned to Hanover, accompanied by the Duke and Duchess de Zell and the Countess de Reuss and the most illustrious personages of their Court. They went in coaches, attended by a regiment of the Guards. Georges-Louis conducted to his new residence the woman whom—for a certain payment in gold—he had made his wife.

She was only sixteen, almost a child, and he twenty-two. But, like other young princes of his time, he was old in the ways of the world. At fifteen he took part with his father and his uncle at the victory of Consarbruck. Since then he had lived alternately in the camp or at the Court. He had a strange disposition, being melancholy, taciturn, and reserved; even those who knew him intimately could never understand him, '*d'une froideur à tout glacer par sa presence*' as the Duchess d'Orléans describes him in one of her letters, and later on she wrote, '*entre nous soit dit, le roi d'Angleterre a un cerveau bizarre.*' He was without sentiment or kindness of any sort, always pre-occupied and gloomy. On the other hand he carefully attended to his political duties; he was tenacious and obstinate in his resolutions

and in his dislikes. He was insensible to all amusements, excepting hunting and women, caring only for the latter as long as they amused him. This was the husband destined for Georges-Guillaume's and Eléonore's bright and happy child.

From the very first it was impossible for them to live happily, she could not disguise her aversion to him, nor he the scorn he felt for her whom his mother had always considered unworthy of him.

The Court of Hanover at that time did not encourage the young couple to observe outward courtesy which they did not feel. Sophie did not take the trouble to guide and direct the young wife. The Memoirs of the Duchess Sophie, written in 1681, prove that when she was on the eve of accepting Sophie-Dorothée as her daughter-in-law, she hated her and passed spiteful remarks about 'the Olbreuze and her child.' She could at least have cautioned Sophie-Dorothée; but the mother-in-law could never replace in the smallest degree the boundless love and affection of the mother. And it was easy to see that she never considered Sophie-Dorothée as a daughter.

Ernest-Auguste was kind and gracious to his

daughter-in-law. He was a true sovereign and a perfect courtier. The woman's heart was nothing to him. He had long since forgotten the sermons on faithfulness which he had preached to his own wife, and expected that his well-known *liaisons* should be tolerated. Why did not he pay some attention to the precious political tool thus placed in his hands?

But it was not likely that any manifestations of courtesy would help to heal a heart so deeply wounded.

On the 30th of October 1683, exactly ten months after the marriage, Sophie-Dorothée gave birth to a son, who was afterwards George II, of England. The young Princess during the necessary retirement of her illness, knew nothing of her husband's conduct. The latter passed part of the year fighting against the Turks in Hungary. Several of his former mistresses lived at the Court, and it was during his visits to Hanover that he renewed his intimacy with them.

As soon as Sophie - Dorothée resumed her usual life, she learned the sad truth. Convinced of her powerlessness to overcome the contempt which he had for her, and to gain the cold heart of the husband who had taken no notice of their

child, separated from her parents—the only beings who really loved her—isolated at Court, surrounded by amusements and *fêtes* that served only to proclaim her rivals' triumphs; the young Princess coveted solitude and wept alone. Then she thought she would endeavour to make Georges-Louis change his conduct.

Court etiquette prevented women of her rank from accepting the homage of the lords who attended the Ducal receptions. She thought of how she could best avenge the insults he heaped upon her. She was pretty, fascinating, and clever. Perhaps a little coquetry would make her husband jealous, and bring him back to her. She tried these means.

During the winter of 1685 Ernest-Auguste and Georges-Louis travelled in Italy. Sophie-Dorothée joined them there. Ilten, who was the 'Conseiller Intime' of the Hanoverian Court, attended her to Venice, with her little Court, consisting of Madame d'Ilten, lady-in-waiting, and one maid of honour, Mdle. de Knesebeck. The Princes stayed at the Foscari Palace. Their *fêtes* were magnificent, and the season was very brilliant. There Sophie-Dorothée, taking advantage of Italian freedom, pretended to accept in

public the attention of two or three princes. All those surrounding her were amazed, they informed her parents, and some years later the Duchess d'Orléans recollected with indignation this audacious coquetry. Georges-Louis, instead of attempting to get reconciled with his wife and ward off the danger, left her to enjoy her pleasures alone; and, accompanied by Ilten, went to Florence and Naples. During this time his wife visited Rome with her father-in-law.

In the spring they all met again at Hanover where they stayed some months, then the Prince left on a distant campaign. In 1686 he took part with the Duke Charles de Lorraine, at the battle of Neuhausel against the Turks. A short time afterwards Sophie-Dorothée brought a second child into the world, called after herself—born the 16th of March, 1687, and married in 1706 to Frederick-William, Prince Royal of Prussia.

After that her life at Hanover became unbearable. She seldom saw her children. Her husband's relations said they would be educated better under their grandmother's supervision. Now that the Prince had assured his succession, he recommenced being seen in public with his favourites. His father had been ruled for years

by the Countess de Platen, his first minister's wife. Georges-Louis was not so faithful, he attached himself first to Madame de Weyhe his father's mistress's sister, then to Mélusine de Schulembourg (who afterwards followed him to London and was created Duchess of Kendal and Marchioness of Dungannon); after her came the Countess de Kielmansegge *née* de Platen (she also followed Georges-Louis to London and was created Countess of Darlington and Leinster), and then the young Countess de Platen *née* d'Uffeln.

Sophie-Dorothée was goaded beyond the limit of endurance. In an unguarded moment she bitterly complained of the insults she daily received, and reproached both father and son who had wounded her so cruelly in her self-esteem; she did not spare the Prince's councillors either, and her remarks being made before indiscreet witnesses were of course repeated. She had no influence at Court, so those who composed it had nothing to fear from her, and as she had retaliated on them, they in turn felt an undying hatred towards her and from that time planned her ruin.

She said one day, 'How I envy the position

of a Marchioness at the French Court. She is not as unhappy as the Princess de Brunswick-Hanover.' They were at this time at war with France, and this speech was considered by the mischief-makers as a proof that she cared more for France than the country to which she belonged. They reproached her for her frivolity, and considered everything she did or said a crime.

The Duchess Sophie ceased to see her. It is true her parents came occasionally to Hanover. During the winter of 1693, at the time of the Carnival, the Duke and Duchess de Zell passed a month at Ernest-Auguste's Court. Except on these occasions Sophie-Dorothée lived alone, or very nearly so, having a few ladies-in-waiting only as companions, and amongst them Mdlle. de Knesebeck who was really attached to her.

The Court of Brunswick-Hanover was then passing a crisis in its existence, it required all Ernest-Auguste's firmness and intelligence to face the embarrassments which threatened him from without. He had at length obtained the coveted title of Elector. On the 22nd of March 1692 the Emperor signed the deed which conferred on the Duke of Hanover this new dignity.

But the Electors of Brandebourg, the Duke de Wolfenbüttel, and several other German princes, were jealous of his increase of power and did all they could to prevent it. Ernest-Auguste's will, made in the year 1683, and since then indorsed by the Emperor, had established the law of primogeniture in the House of Brunswick. The Prince Maximilien (Ernest-Auguste's second son) refused to be bound by this, and asserted his claims; the envious ones profited by this, and Hanover became the centre of a conspiracy, headed by the Duke's own son, with the object of undoing the political work which their sovereign had sanctioned—Ernest-Auguste did not hesitate. He was informed of all, he had the Prince Maximilien arrested together with M. de Moltke (master of the hounds) who were the principal offenders. In prison Moltke tried to escape. Ernest-Auguste would not listen to reason, but immediately had him executed for high treason.

The occasion seemed a good one to get rid of Sophie-Dorothée also; and several tried to compromise her in this terrible tragedy, when the heads of many were in jeopardy. It was thought it would be easy to inculcate and de-

throne her who was the wife of the Duke and the mother of his children. It is certain there were many at the Court who were only waiting for an opportunity to bring about her downfall.

CHAPTER VII

THE KÖNIGSMARCK AFFAIR

THE catastrophe which ruined the life of Eléonore's daughter has been repeated a hundred times, and it would take pages to enumerate the authors who have written about it in every language. In every country of our old Europe, the specious politician of centuries ago has bequeathed to posterity some impenetrable drama, from which he carefully removes from the first such traces as would lead one to suspect its errors. These mysteries have long since been buried, and the few politicians who possessed the key to the secret are dead and buried also, therefore the publication of apocryphal writings has

been encouraged, and inventions more or less ingenious have been brought forward to satisfy public curiosity. For instance, what has not been written in France about the 'Iron mask?'

The adventures of the Count de Kœnigsmarck and Sophie-Dorothée have had a similar effect in Germany; and one can only say that, excepting some recent works, all that has appeared on this subject has been pure invention.

The moment that Kœnigsmarck perished in the Castle of Hanover, all the persons, and the number was very limited, who had had any intercourse with the Count or the Princess were put in durance, their dwellings being searched and all their papers seized. At the conclusion of the inquiry, which resulted in the separation of the husband and wife, all traces of the incident in the State records were destroyed. The formulary of the sittings of the Minister's counsel in the Duchy of Zell have been preserved. For a long time these documents were included in the records, but the acts relating to the year 1694 are missing. In the correspondence of the Duchess d'Orleans and the Electress Sophie, which has been preserved at Hanover, and which contain innumerable

letters regularly exchanged between the two Princesses, for a space of nearly twenty years the records of the period, which extends from the 8th of July to the 18th of November, 1694, have disappeared. This suppression was certainly made during the life-time of the Duchess Sophie, since she only died two years before Leibnitz, and in the extracts of her correspondence, which the great philosopher left us, the same gap appears. That this suppression was planned is an historical fact. They also in a like manner destroyed all information respecting the Count de Koenigsmarck's death, the arrests, the inquiries, and the searches which followed it.

When the Elector of Hanover came to the throne of Great Britain, the English desired to know the reason why she, who would have been their Queen, was a prisoner in the Chateau d'Ahliden. Some even came to Hanover to make inquiries on the subject. They learnt little, except what the public knew, and that was next to nothing. Several of the politicians who had taken part in these events were dead. Those who still lived took good care to make no disclosures. One knows the historians of the eighteenth century were not over scrupulous. Not satisfied with

their investigations they made up for what was deficient by inventions.

It was not until the beginning of this century when George IV came to the throne of England, that the government really instigated inquiries on this subject. The Duke of Cambridge, governor of Hanover, ordered an inquiry in all the repositories of public deeds, and also in those of families far and near who had in any way been connected with the affair of the Princess-Electorale. By these means they found and preserved in the records of Hanover some documents which had escaped extermination. Amongst the number was one which was nearly complete, giving the reason for the separation. This had been preserved by the family lawyer of Sophie-Dorothée. Since then little by little a large number of letters have come to light, which were exchanged by the councillors of the two Courts at the time of the event, and they record the impressions of the political men of the two States. The diplomatic correspondence concerning the disappearance of the Count de Koenigsmarck was also found.

Besides the documents which have been recently published, we have consulted a collection

of letters, preserved in the library of 'L'Université de Lund,' which are believed to be a series of documents concerning the relationship which existed between the Princess Sophie-Dorothee and the Count de Königsmarck. We are convinced that this correspondence is as apocryphal, as were other documents written about this mysterious affair.

If we have been unable to establish for a certainty all the minute details of the incident, at least we can fix the principal points with accuracy. We will endeavour to relate here, without any assistance from doubtful sources, the events which took place in Hanover during the summer of 1694.

The exact time that the Count de Königsmarck made his appearance at the Court of Hanover is ignored, but on the 29th of February, 1688, he was a guest at a masked ball given by the Duke Ernest-Auguste. His parents resided in the Chateau d'Agathenbourg, which was situated near Stade, and it is very probable that following the usual custom of the greater part of the young gentlemen of that time, he was in his youth presented at the neighbouring Court of Zell. It is without doubt, that at one time his mother was

intimate with the Duke and Duchess of Zell. When Sophie-Dorothee was not eligible to be sought after by princes, the Countess de Koenigsmarck asked for her hand for one of her sons. Later on, during the negotiations which preceded the peace of Zell, it was she who assisted in the endeavour to marry the Princess to the hereditary Prince of Sweden. That Philippe had from his youth been attached to Sophie-Dorothee as was pretended, we cannot affirm, indeed we are rather inclined to think the contrary. When the Countess de Koenigsmarck had tried to marry Sophie-Dorothee to one of her sons, it was not Philippe who was in view, but his eldest brother who subsequently was killed fighting against the Turks.

Philippe, until this time, was only remarkable for his foolish pranks in all the countries in the world. An English minister wrote to a colleague in Hanover about him and said : ' I knew him in England, Hamburg, Flanders, and Hanover. He is a thorough libertine whom I have always avoided.'

Was it merely the work of chance ? or had Koenigsmarck when joining the Duke of Hanover's troops, any intention of approaching the Princess ?

This is a point we cannot decide. It is certain he obtained the command of a Hanoverian regiment, and on the 13th of November, 1691, was a colonel in Ernest-Auguste's service.

Notwithstanding his follies Koenigsmarck had a tender, generous heart. He saw the Princess sad and neglected. In remembrance of the old relationship which had existed between his family and Sophie-Dorothee's parents, and led away by her beauty and high position, he evinced a greater love for her than could have been expected from a frivolous and inconsistent character like his. He was a brilliant courtier, well known in all European Courts. His name was one of the most illustrious in Germany, and he was highly connected. The Princess ended in believing the love which he knew so well how to inspire.

The following note preserved in the Archives of Hanover, and traced in Leibnitz's hand on the margin of a pamphlet printed a short time after the Count de Koenigsmarck's death, proves that for a long time the Count had made love to the Princess, and that little care was taken to hide their sentiments in public :—

‘The Electress and the Princess have not seen one another for about two years. And this

is the reason : When there was an alarm of fire at the Opera Theatre, the Count de Kœnigsmarck hurriedly called out, "Save the Princess Electorale," as in the confusion the equerries could not find her. In the confusion the Count took the Electress by the hand to lead her out of danger ; but, perceiving his mistake, he abruptly left her and ran to the Princess. As the others had seen the Count conducting the Electress they did not trouble about her, so she was left alone in the crowd until the Prince Maximilien came to her rescue. The Electress made some jesting remarks to the Princess about the affair, and the Princess was offended.'

It is then without doubt that before and at the time that he lost his life, the Count de Kœnigsmarck considered himself knight errant to Sophie-Dorothée.

In the spring of 1694, the intercourse between Georges-Louis and his wife had become more and more strained. The Princess's health was a cause of anxiety, but Georges was colder to her than ever—Kœnigsmarck, for reasons which they did not believe, decided to leave Hanover and proceed to Dresden, where the Elector of Saxony had offered him the position of general in his army.

Doubtless to console Sophie-Dorothee, who was troubled by his impending departure, he redoubled his attentions to her, and visited her every day.

It seemed as if by design no precautions were taken. The eagerness with which the Court of Hanover took advantage of the force of circumstances, goes very far towards proving that their otherwise inexplicable negligence was the result of calculation.

In June, Georges-Louis visited the Court of Berlin. Before he left, he and his wife made an attempt at an explanation, and in a moment of impatience, he said, 'We are too much restraint one on the other. On my return, I will write to your father and ask him if we can be separated.' These were his last words of farewell to the Princess.

He had scarcely left Hanover before Sophie-Dorothee went to the Court of Zell. Georges-Guillaume and Eléonore were then at Bruchhausen, a country seat in the middle of the woods. Sophie Dorothee had many times complained of the unhappy position she held at Hanover. She entreated her parents to give their consent to a separation.

Georges-Guillaume had worked for three years to accomplish that union which his daughter asked him to sever. He had made enormous sacrifices to reach that stage which he had considered his highest political triumph and regarded as the only means of assuring Eléonore's and Sophie-Dorothée's future and peace with his family. He peremptorily refused his daughter's request, adding there were many other princesses in the world who had cause to complain of their husbands' conduct.

On the 14th of June, a courier despatched from Hanover, came to fetch the Princess from Bruchhausen. On the 15th she returned to Hanover, where she was indisposed, and on the 29th of June they expected her to rejoin the Court of Zell at Bruchhausen, where she was to have taken the waters.

At Hanover, Sophie-Dorothée saw Koenigsmarck again. The Prince Electoral was still at Berlin. The young colonel came and went as he liked to the castle. He had resigned his appointment in the Hanoverian army, and was making the preparations necessary for his departure for Dresden, where the Elector of Saxony had just conferred on him the dignity of General. Although

he often prolonged his visits to the early hours of the morning in the Princess's apartments, no one interfered to prevent it.

Let anyone imagine the effect these proceedings had on a little Court like that of Hanover, full of intrigues and rivalry, where everything was known, where the passions of love and hatred were freely indulged in to satisfy the caprice of the moment.

Mdme. de. Platen, the Elector's mistress, and the first minister's wife, and, consequently possessing power and influence, felt herself insulted by the indignant speeches of the Princess Electorale, and hated her in consequence. But what her share was in the catastrophe we cannot clearly ascertain. Some pretend that she was in love with Koenigsmarck, and that he had repelled her; others, that he had refused to accept her daughter's hand when it was offered him. It is certain that a few days after Koenigsmarck's death, Louis XIV, asked the Duchess d'Orléans at the dinner table, whether it was true what they said of the Princess Electorale, that before she would hear of a reconciliation with her husband, she demanded that the Countess de Platen, 'her accusatress,' should be

expelled from the Court. Afterwards, Sophie-Dorothée, who was ignorant of the Count's fate, wrote the following note to the Councillor de Bussche :

‘ I tremble if the Count has fallen into the hands of a certain lady [meaning the Countess Platen] as she would injure his life. Have the kindness to inquire into this affair, I shall wait for a few days to ascertain the poor Count's fate. In the meantime, I rely on your prudence, for I am incapable of assisting you in my present state.’

One can believe that those who were strong and powerful struck the final blow. In several of the romances published about the death of Kœnigsmarck, he was regarded as responsible, but we feel obliged to restrict ourselves to the description of facts, established by authenticated documents, and all we can do is to give the indications of his culpability.

In the evening of the 1st of July, Kœnigsmarck visited the Princess. Some asserted that he was seized by the guards as he was leaving one of the corridors of the castle, and as he resisted he was killed by those ordered to arrest him. Others, that Prince George, before

he left for Berlin, believing his wife was unfaithful, had arranged the murder, which was carried out according to his instructions.

A mark is still shown on the wall of one of the passages of the castle of Hanover, which was supposed to have been made by Koenigsmarck's sword during the struggle. This is the only dumb witness of that bloody scene, of which the secret has never been discovered. All that we can affirm is that Koenigsmarck disappeared in the night from the 1st to the 2nd of July, 1694, without anyone knowing what became of his remains.

Saint-Simon mentions the disappearance in the following terms: 'This Duke of Hanover (Georges-Louis) had married his first cousin, of the same house, and daughter of the Duke de Zell. She was beautiful, and for some time they lived happily. The Count de Koenigsmarck, who was young and handsome, came to his Court and gave him cause for offence. He became jealous. He watched them, and was assured of the truth of what he had ignored throughout; so in a fit of fury, he had the Count arrested, and immediately thrown into a hot oven.'

His death was the cause of so many difficulties to the Hanoverian government, that in all prob-

ability it was not premeditated. According to appearances, they wanted to arrest and question him, and if necessary, they would have employed torture, which was an ordinary occurrence in those days, search his residence, seize both his and the Princess's papers, and ruin them both by unexceptionable proofs. Kœnigsmärck's death was useless. We believe it was neither ordered nor desired.

However that may be, one thing is certain, it was resolved to crush the Princess. Her papers and the Count's were seized, Mdlle. de Knesebeck, Sophie-Dorothée's *confidante* was arrested ; her sister, Mdme. de Maitsch, the Princess, and Kœnigsmarck's servants, and those of Mdlle. de Knesebeck underwent a vigorous interrogation.

The inquiry seems to have produced no decisive result. The letters found from both, although termed 'scandalous' in the formulary of the deed of separation, seem to have supplied none of the unanswerable proofs they hoped to discover. It is true one letter of Leibnitz's says, 'There was a deal of malice in her. . . . They would never have believed at Zell that she was so guilty, unless her letters had been produced.' But he added, 'It seems she derided her father's kindness

and credulity. He is in his dotage she said, it is a sign he will live a long while.' In no part did they find any mention of her crime.

Mdlle. de Knesebeck showed a firmness worthy of all praise. Nothing made her give in, not even the threat of torture. She declared herself the only *confidante* of the intrigue, and never ceased declaring Sophie-Dorothée's innocence ; repudiating the idea of nocturnal visits from Kœnigsmarck to the Princess, and any wrong intimacy between them. To shake her courage, she was imprisoned in the strong castle of Scharzfels, but after three years of captivity, she was liberated and took refuge in Vienna.

Mdme. de Maitsch knew only one thing, and that was that her sister had endeavoured to dissuade the Princess from seeing the Count de Kœnigsmarck.

The servants ignored everything. They made the strangest depositions. One spoke of having been sent to get some poison to kill the rats. For a second, they thought an attempt on the Prince Electoral's life was premeditated ; but it was impossible to draw out of their testimony any accusations respecting Sophie-Dorothée.

During this time, the rumour of the Count

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de Koenigsmarck's disappearance had spread over all Europe. One of his sisters, the Countess Aurore, possessed great influence at the Court of Dresden. The other, the Countess de Lœwenhaupt, had several relations amongst the highest German nobility. Both hastened to Hanover, and demanded news of their brother, if he were not dead, to ask that he should be set at liberty. They soon saw that they could not obtain any satisfactory answers, and, vowing vengeance, they left. The Count de Koenigsmarck was a Saxon general, and several German courts, belonging to the league which was formed to protest against the concession of the title of Elector to the house of Brunswick-Hanover, Brandebourg, Wolfenbüttel and Saxony only waited for a pretext to declare war.

These menaces served to aggravate still more Sophie-Dorothee's position, by making of her a kind of national enemy. The political work of the house of Brunswick was threatened. Ernest-Auguste sent for his brother, who, as his own good name was at stake, could not refuse his assistance. And from that time, Georges-Guillaume was influenced by the Elector of Hanover and his advisers when settling his

daughter's affairs. Sophie-Dorothée's ruin was impending.

On the 24th of July, and the 2nd of August, identical instructions were addressed to the envoys of the Courts of Zell and Hanover, to Vienna, Ratisbonne, Stockholm, Berlin, to the Hague, and London. They peremptorily denied any connection between the disappearance, 'still inexplicable' of the Count de Koenigsmarck, and the manifest coldness, which they had, it is true remarked in their reports for some time past as existing between the Prince Electoral and his wife. This would not compromise them in any degree, and they would await the course of events.

Pressed by the Countess Aurore's insistence, the Elector of Saxony had, since the 13th of July, sent an aide-de-camp to Hanover. The latter's language was at first so imperious and menacing that Ernest-Auguste feared he would see Saxony join the league formed against his Electorate, and he sent, on the 21st of July, a special envoy, the Count de Wittgenstein to Dresden. During three months anxious notes were exchanged between Dresden and Hanover. One moment it was a question of recalling the

Electoral troops which were cantoned in Holland, under the orders of William III. Finally, the Emperor fearing to lose the useful assistance of the Hanoverian troops in his campaign against Louis XIV, sent his envoy, the Count Harrach, to Saxony, to maintain peace between the two Electors. Little by little it all calmed down. But a way was opened, and Hanover and Zell pursued it with vigour. It was a political affair where sentiments counted as nought. They had found a means to disembarrass themselves from her who had caused all this trouble.

To return to the Princess Electorale. Before the climax her position at Hanover had become intolerable. One can judge what it was after the scene of the 1st of July.

Two letters from the Count de Platen to the minister Bernstorff, shew her state of mind just then. On the 13th of July, Platen deemed it necessary to remove her at once, 'She is so extremely anxious to leave Hanover,' then on the 15th, he wrote again, 'She is distressed because her journey is postponed for a few days.'

Embarrassed by the unsatisfactory result of their inquiries, the advisers of the Courts of Zell and Hanover were still endeavouring to find a

solution of their difficulties. For the sake of appearance, they had publicly denied that there was any connection with the disappearance of the Count de Kœnigsmarck and the Princess's affair. They had not sufficient proofs to have a separation pronounced between Sophie-Dorothée and Georges-Louis, and thus prevent her from marrying again. Nevertheless, they were obliged to find means to this end, and they settled on the following plan. Sophie-Dorothée having several times expressed a wish to be separated from her husband, they began a trial for attempted desertion, the object being to prevent the Princess from justifying her resolution by pleading her husband's conduct, which might have produced a different result from that intended. The last point is shewn very clearly by the following lines, written on the 15th of July, to Bernstorff, by the Count de Platen, 'As to your proposition that the Princess Electorale should be told by M. de Bousch that, in order to save appearances, she should declare that she will not live any more with the Prince Electoral, and, on that account, should demand permission to leave here before his return; we think we can manage to give out that report

without suggesting that it should come from the lips of the Princess.'

On the 17th, Sophie-Dorothée left for Ahlden, a little castle situated in the Duchy of Zell, which had been fixed upon as her residence. There M. de Casaucau, the minister of the reformed church of Zell, was sent by the Duchess Eléonore to talk to her. At first, he found her in despair. Even in the midst of the frivolous Hanoverian Court, Sophie-Dorothée had always been religiously inclined. Several of her letters shew that she had preserved a remembrance of her mother's careful training when she was a child. By his exhortations, the pastor succeeded in consoling her, and giving her fresh courage. Both mother and daughter seem from that time to have been resigned to the trials with which it had pleased God to surround them. This is what the Duchess de Zell wrote to the Duke Antoine-Ulric in reply to a kind and sympathetic letter which he had written to her.

'I am infinitely obliged for the honour you have done me in sympathising with my sorrows, and for all the kind things which you have had the goodness to say to me about my daughter. I hope that in time and with God's grace she will

surmount the difficulties with which she is surrounded, and I earnestly pray that it will please Him once more to unite in love all the members of this house.'

Without being treated as a prisoner, Sophie-Dorothee was one in reality, and she was kept in ignorance of all that passed outside Ahlden. The ministers from Zell came again to interrogate her. A written account of this interview forms an important document which was found at Hanover. To obtain the confession from her, which she had always refused, they resorted to a means often employed with criminals. They told her that all had been discovered, and it was useless for her to make any more denials. The Princess expressed the deepest repentance knowing that she deserved her fate, but threw herself on the Elector's generosity. As to the Prince Electoral, she seemed to be afraid of him. Again she denied the crime, admitting that appearances were against her. She said 'Koenigsmarck never visited me in my apartments during the night.' She seemed disposed to be separated from her husband, as she was convinced that she could never conquer 'the aversion which for years the Prince had shewn her.' She said it

will be happiness to her to retire from the world, and she hoped to become an example of piety as she had once been one of scandal.

On the 5th, 9th, and 29th of August the State Ministers of Zell and Hanover held three conferences at Engeson to arrange the conditions of the separation. There, by mutual agreement, the terms were drawn up which the Prince Electoral demanded, and submitted to the tribunal which was to pronounce the sentence. The Court of Hanover exacted that the Princess's fortune should be taken from her, and replaced by a pension; also that, during the trial, she was to be transferred from the Chateau d'Ahliden, which was situated in the territory of Zell, to that of Lauenau, which belonged to Hanover.

On the 31st of August, Sophie-Dorothée was removed to the new residence assigned her—she was sent under escort like a convict going from prison to prison.

On the 8th of September there was another meeting of the Ministers at Bissendorf, to settle the final details of the proceedings. They wished to establish, beforehand, all that they pretended they had obtained from the judges. The following passage from one of Bernstorff's letters,

written five days after the conference, proves this very clearly : 'The principal point is, that they should not find out that we have secured the terms of judgment from the first.'

On the 20th, the Court of Judges, constituted to pronounce the decree, opened the case. They were composed of the following members :—François Eichfeld, superintendent of the Lutheran Church of Lünebourg, Gustave Molanus, superintendent of Harbourg, and the aulic councillors, Paul Püchler and Antoine-Georges Heldberg, representatives of the Duc de Zell. Gérard Molanus, abbé de Lockkum, David Ruppert Ehrythropyus, the Court preacher, the councillors of the ecclesiastical affairs, Maurice Spilcker, and Henri-Christophe de Hattorf, represented the Elector. The presidency was bestowed on Albert-Philippe de Bussche, minister and adviser to the Elector of Hanover. The Prince's advocate was Antoine-Lucius, aulic councillor of Hanover, the Princess's, Rodolphe Thies, aulic councillor of Zell, and it was in the possession of the latter's descendants that the greater part of a copy of the trial was found.

At the first sitting the ecclesiastical judges thought it necessary to hear the Princess Elec-

torale. They decided that she ought to be informed, and they submitted to her choice whether she would reply verbally or in writing. The members of the Council who had received orders to arrange everything, listened to the judges, but they were careful not to allow the Princess the alternative. A verbal explanation might have ruined their plans.

They sent the Princess's advocate to Lauenau, and to secure the result of his mission, he was accompanied by one of the ministers. He was an officer in one of the two Courts, so it was easy to direct his conduct. He was ordered to obtain a written declaration from Sophie-Dorothée affirming that she always intended to be separated. The Princess willingly signed what was required of her. The terms of this declaration it seems were not found compromising enough by the vice-chancellor of the Elector of Hanover. He feared that the ecclesiastical judges would decide to send a commission to hear Sophie-Dorothée. Before submitting it to the judges he thought it wiser to arrange another declaration for the Princess to sign, and to get the other ministers to adopt his new plan. This is what he wrote to the Grand-Maréchal Bulow, 'It is

in reality the same thing, save that it has fewer words, changed or rather arranged in another manner, and it seems to me it will be shorter, more simple and more conducive to the end in view.' Thus they did all they could to deceive the judges.

During the month of October, the Elector of Hanover visited his brother, who was then staying with his Court at la Gœhrde, and there the negotiations were continued. The outside difficulties which they had been obliged to contend with were nearly removed. But it needed the Elector's presence near the Duke de Zell to prevent him from changing his opinion. It was no doubt with the intention of lessening his scruples that they paid kind attentions to *Eléonore*. An agreement dated from this period and signed and approved by the Elector and his son, increased the Dowry of the Duchess which was then fixed at 12,000 crowns a-year. It was also necessary for him to be at the Court to instruct the Princess's advocate in the part he wanted him to take.

Sophie-Dorothée who had always desired a separation, signed the new declaration without saying a word, and the minister, *Bernstorff*, wrote

to the Councillor Thies, Sophie - Dorothée's advocate, to command him to feign indisposition, and so prevent his being present in person at the trial.

But, notwithstanding all these precautions, the judges decided that they ought to hear the Princess.

Early in November, Ernest-Auguste left la Gœhrde. On the 5th, Conseiller de Hattorf, wrote from Hanover to d'Iltén.

'We returned from Gœhrde the day before yesterday. We left the Duke de Zell in good health, and well disposed towards the affair in hand. May God preserve in him those sentiments to which Madame la Duchesse is directly opposed, moving heaven and earth to make His Serene Highness change his opinion. Messieurs de Bernstorff and de Bulow hope for the best. Madame la Duchesse pointedly asked His Highness the Elector, not to return here for the Carnival, but the Duke arrived at the commencement of the opera.'

A few days before, the ecclesiastical delegation had heard the Princess; but care was taken to make her sign another document confirming her preceding declarations before their arrival.

Thus, under a wrong impression, Sophie-Dorothee replied to the kind questions of the delegation, that she could not retract her resolution.

On the 3rd of December, the Prince Electoral's advocate drew up his conclusions. He insisted that the Princess had openly confirmed her intentions of deserting the Prince, and, therefore, it was impossible for her husband to live with her any more, and he asked that, in consequence, a divorce should be granted against her, with a prohibition against her marrying again.

Conseiller d'Hattorf's letter to Ilten has shewn us the Duchess de Zell's views on the subject. The complications from the outer world were removed for the time. The Elector of Hanover was not there to crush the Duke de Zell's love for his daughter. Eléonore made another attempt to save her child. We cannot pause to consider whether it was owing to her importunities that Sophie-Dorothee's advocate changed his tactics. During the early days of December, the dispositions of the Court of Zell completely changed. In energetic language, Thies claimed from the judges the Princess's right to marry again.

Immediately an alarm was raised at Hanover.

They sent a long statement to Zell. The Vice-Chancellor Hugo wrote several letters to Bernstorff. He pleaded political considerations, and dwelt upon the necessity which existed for freeing themselves from the embarrassing person of Sophie-Dorothée, and for controlling her future in such a manner as to preserve her precious heritage to the House of Brunswick. On the 6th of December he wrote to Bernstorff, 'On ne nous en voudra pas, si dans cette sombre et misérable affaire, nous songeons un peu à notre sécurité future.'

At last Zell ceased to resist, and on the 28th of December the judges pronounced the separation in the form we have described.

The Count de Platen soon informed his friends. On the 30th he triumphantly wrote to Ilten at Berlin and detailed the incidents at the trial, adding, 'The lady is strictly forbidden to marry again.' In seeing these words used by a man who is at the same time the Elector's minister and the husband of his mistress, one involuntarily remembers the expression the Electress Sophie employed to designate her sister-in-law. She often called her 'that person.' The divorce is only just over, and Platen has only just been

assured that the Princess Electorale will not one day be his sovereign, when he throws off the mask and no longer disguises his hatred of her. In him one sees a true type of the accomplished courtier and time server, one who looks from afar on his master's adversity.

Sophie-Dorothée listened in silence to the sentence communicated to her. Her name was erased from the Church papers. In February 1696, she was transferred to the Chateau d'Ahliden, where she remained for thirty-two years when she died. She never saw her children or her father again.

Was she guilty?

It did not matter. They wanted her no longer. For her assurance in coming amongst them as a wife, they had revenged themselves upon her. She had assured the succession to the throne of Hanover; they had taken her money, and enriched themselves with her inheritance. That was enough.

And now it only remained for them to try and efface the trace which the two intruders, mother and daughter, had left in the family. They might shed tears of blood, but the stain which marked their course could not soon be forgotten. And

more than twenty years later, she who in her letters termed Sophie-Dorothée a 'bête maudite,' she who had nourished the Electress Sophie's hatred, the vindictive Duchess d'Orléans reproached the Kings of England with the shame of their origin.

CHAPTER VIII

GEORGES-GUILLAUME'S DECLINING YEARS

WITH her daughter's misfortune, Eléonore's happiness disappeared. In the future she will pay dearly for the triumph which her beauty had attained. In the midst of all the grandeur, to which she never seemed suited, she had preserved the simplicity and reserve of a woman of intelligence and tact. Her old age when put to the test will show what treasures of devotedness, kindness, and self-sacrifice, her noble soul possessed; and her dignity under all circumstances will become manifest.

One has seen by the result of the trial, and the victory of her daughter's enemies, that

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Eléonore's influence over the Duke de Zell was nearly lost. Age had partially destroyed those irresistible charms which had conquered Georges-Guillaume. Time had also transformed the husband. The generosity of his nature had disappeared when he approached the seventies. Like all old people he reflected on the past in a common-sense way; henceforth the thoughtless and chivalrous outbursts, in one of which he had committed the folly of marrying Eléonore, will give place to reasoning, which will sound the future and measure the enormity of a fault which he had cruelly to atone for.

Before the separation of Sophie-Dorothée, his daughter's marriage with Georges-Louis had made him dependent on his brother. In 1688 Bourgeauville wrote to Louis XIV, 'Madame la Duchesse de Zell has not sufficient power over her husband to make him alter a resolution once he has made it. She can only facilitate it when he has an inclination elsewhere. M. de Bernstorff is the only one who can really influence him.' The Kœnigsmarck incident only served to weaken Eléonore's influence.

From that time Georges-Guillaume completely changed. They said the catastrophe

had opened his eyes. He repented of his error; and the repentance took the form of hatred, for he believed those advisers were right, when they persuaded him not to see the daughter who until then he had so fondly loved.

Profiting by these sentiments, the Elector, the Electress, and the Prince Electoral made him promise to renounce her, and in the future, when they saw him waver, took care to remind him of the frivolous remarks which Sophie-Dorothée had made about his age. They pleaded the injury, more or less imaginary, which her conduct had caused to their political work, and cleverly persuaded him that his marriage with Eléonore had been the cause of all the trouble, and that he ought to make reparation by following their advice.

Georges-Guillaume had always been weak, and he was become still more apathetic in his old age, he let the Electress Sophie direct the Electoral politics, and as her husband was too ill to interfere, she once more fascinated Georges-Guillaume by her wit and sparkling conversation. From this time she influenced him in everything. Bernstorff, the powerful minister of Zell, could see that Georges-Guillaume's days were numbered.

Political power was his only thought. 'He was sincere, at least as much so as a state minister can be,' as the Italian Leti maliciously said of him. He knew that the state would gain nothing by Georges-Guillaume being reconciled with his daughter, and that it was to his own interest to cultivate the Prince Electoral's favour. He offended the Duchess de Zell, but that made no difference to him, as he had assured his position at the Court. He united his influence to that of the Court of Hanover, and as Georges-Guillaume had not the strength of mind to break through the chain of circumstance, by which he was surrounded, he died without seeing his child again.

He was still fond of Eléonore, and gave many proofs of his affection to her, but concerning Sophie - Dorothée he remained obdurate, and would do nothing to upset the arrangements made by his family.

When the trial was over he continued his tranquil existence, divided his time between politics, visits to the Court of Hanover, and certain migrations with Eléonore to Zell; but hunting was always his favourite amusement.

The war continued against Louis XIV, and

as the Duke de Brunswick's troops were in the first lines of the Imperial army, it required all their energy to make a stand against an adversary who had obtained such brilliant successes as Fleurus, Nerwinde, Steinkerque, and la Marsaille. In return for the dignity of Elector which the Emperor had conferred on the House of Brunswick, they entered into a compact by which they promised to be his perpetual allies, and thus signified their willingness to follow his fortune in peace or war. One knows that France attempted to spread dissension amongst the allies. Since 1694 negotiations had been carried on secretly at Holland and Savoy; also in 1696 it was openly announced that treaties between Callières and Weede took place at Ghent and the Hague. The union of the House of Brunswick was of greater necessity than ever. So the Emperor and Georges-Guillaume were entirely ruled by his brother and sister-in-law.

Peace was signed at Ryswick, and questions of importance still occupied the Princes of Brunswick. As they were Protestant sovereigns they were solicited to obtain from Louis XIV some ameliorations in the conditions of their co-religionists in France. When it became known

that their efforts in this respect had been futile, the French refugees became uneasy. The reformed Church of Zell owed its existence to Eléonore. It was entirely supported by her charity. She also out of her own private purse paid for the lodgings of the poorer class of refugees who had been attracted to the Duchy of Zell by the religious liberty which had been proclaimed. It was to Eléonore that the elderly people addressed their request in the following terms: 'We consider your Highness as the medium which the Lord has employed to manifest his consolation to us. We bless the Divine Ruler for elevating your Highness, for like another Esther you have so generously obtained for us the favourable protection of your august husband. Relying on your Highness's bounty, we have dared to present a humble request. With deep respect we supplicate you to support that which we have addressed to Monseigneur le Duc.'

This language shews that the Duchess de Zell had always been kind to the refugees. Thanks to her efforts, although Georges-Guillaume was powerless to obtain any redress for them from Louis XIV, he allowed them to build a larger church at Zell, which the Duchess endowed with

3,000 crowns, thus assuring the minister's support.

A few months after the Peace of Ryswick, the Elector Ernest-Auguste died after a long and painful illness (January 23, 1698). Georges-Guillaume was much affected by his death, as he had always been greatly attached to him. Ernest-Auguste's last words were to intrust his family's future to his brother's keeping.

The Duke de Zell kept his promise. In the important question of the succession to the throne of England, about which the Electress Sophie displayed such great activity, Georges-Guillaume laid the foundation of the plan which secured the throne of Great Britain for his nephew.

He had always been on terms of intimacy with William of Orange. He corresponded with him after his succession to the throne of England, and one of the first acts of William III after his accession was the conferring on Georges-Guillaume of the Order of the Garter. The Duchess de Zell was also on good terms with William. It will be remembered he persuaded the House of Hanover to recognize her title of Duchess. On the other hand she proved her loyalty to him. She had before the last war influenced the Duke de Zell to

ally himself with him. William of Orange held her in higher esteem than the Electress Sophie or the Duke Ernest-Auguste.

Thanks to the work of time, the relationship between the Electress Sophie and the Duchess de Zell had become less strained. The former took good care to obtain Eléonore and her husband's assistance in her negotiations with William III. Sophie expatiated on the advantages that would accrue to Eléonore's grandson, as in event of success he would obtain one of the richest crowns in Europe; and no doubt Eléonore also saw the occasion which would thus present itself for her to get the King of England to intercede for Sophie-Dorothée.

During the winter of 1698 to 1699 William III came to Zell. Did Eléonore speak to him about the prisoner of Ahlden? Did he take the precaution to inform the Duchess beforehand, that all efforts on his part would be in vain? We do not know, but it is certain that before the King's arrival she intended to ask him to intercede in her daughter's favour. For the following paragraph shews in what terms Héron informed Louis XIV of her project, 'Madame la Duchesse de Zell, will endea-

vour to persuade the King to speak in the Princess of Hanover's favour; but as the ministers are not well disposed towards the mother or daughter, they have prejudiced the Duke, and he thinks the King of England will object to interfere in the Princess's affairs.'

No doubt Eléonore's effort, if she did make one, was in vain, for no change was made in Sophie-Dorothee's existence. As the King of England stayed at the Court of Zell first, the Duchess did her utmost, as she had promised, to further the cause of the House of Brunswick with William III. A few days later when he was leaving Hanover, he promised to the Electress Sophie's descendants the throne of Great Britain. Sophie's intimate friend Leibnitz wrote to the Duchess de Zell to congratulate her on the happy termination of the negotiations to which she had rendered her assistance. In 1701 the law of succession accorded to Brunswick the crown of the Stuarts.

Eléonore had shewn so much prudence and firmness, and such dignity in the midst of her trials, that those who criticised her past life and her birth were obliged to acknowledge her

merits also, and the position that she had created for herself in their midst.

That position was always considerable, and Louis XIV, who had resumed his connection with the Dukes de Brunswick, after the peace of Ryswick, always assured the Duchess of the great esteem and affection he entertained for her.

But she did not care much for worldly successes now. When she could not avoid it, she accompanied her husband to the *fêtes* at Hanover. She was always ready to forward or assist the plans of the illustrious family to which she was allied, but she preferred leading a retired, quiet life, nursing her husband when he was ill, or when he had a fall from his horse—notwithstanding his great age, he obstinately continued to hunt. She also distributed charities to the poor, and regulated her Court which she had always carefully directed.

Since her separation not one of the Court of Hanover dared visit Sophie-Dorothée. The Duchess de Zell was the only one who consoled and sympathized with her. The poor Princess, whom they now called the Princess d'Ahliden, from the name of her prison, lived her solitary existence in a dreary castle, lost in the midst of a

desolate country. It is true her residence was furnished suitably for the daughter of a sovereign, but the two or three persons who composed her little court were bound by oath not to allow anyone to approach her. Armed men watched day and night outside the castle. If she went for a drive in the country, her carriage was surrounded by mounted guards. A visit to Ahlden or the delivery of a letter or packet necessitated an order from the Sovereign. Vacquerbat, the Governor of Ahlden, had received orders to be relentless on this point. Thus alone, and neglected by all, deprived of the sight of her son and daughter, Sophie-Dorothée had moments of despair. She tried to move those who had caused her misery. She wrote first to Georges-Louis on the occasion of the Elector's death. 'I shall never console myself for having displeased your Royal Highness. I implore you to pardon my faults. My sufferings have been so terrible and so sad that I cannot recount them. The depth and sincerity of my repentance will, I trust, soften the heart of Her Highness the Electress, and if to crown her grace she will permit me to see and embrace our beloved children, my gratitude for this favour so ardently

wished for will be infinite, since I desire nothing else to enable me to die content.'

She also wrote to the Electress Sophie: 'Once more I entreat your Highness Electorale to pardon all that I have done that has displeased you, and to intercede for me with M. L'Electeur. I have implored him to grant me that pardon which I so earnestly desire, and to allow me to see my children. I should be grateful if your Royal Highness Electorale would also allow me to kiss your hand before I die.'

They both refused her. The Duchess de Zell could only console her daughter in her hopelessness by mingling her tears with hers. The sorrow that the mother experienced during the many visits extending over twenty years completely crushed her. Her eyes were dimmed by continual weeping.

The pastor of the Reformed Church of Zell, obtained on rare occasions permission to visit the Princess. He also obtained a similar permission for a few friends who were for the most part refugees of noble French families who had found a retreat in the Ducal Court. They testified their gratitude to the Duchess by paying homage to her daughter.

The study of religion which interested the enlightened world at the Court of France and generally in Europe occupied a part of the time which the Duchess passed alone, when her husband was hunting, or when he went alone to the *fêtes* of the carnival at the Court of Hanover. She was not blind in her beliefs nor given to superstition. She did not belong to those who became enamoured of the visions of Rosamonde d'Assebourg, at Lunebourg.* But she had firm confidence in God. It was her faith that sustained her in her troubles. And she endeavoured to instruct herself in the religion which she so sincerely practised.

Leibnitz wrote to Bossuet on the 13th of July 1692. 'Madame la Duchesse de Zell has carefully read your 'Histoire des Variations.' And a few months later the Electress Sophie wrote to Leibnitz. 'The Duchess de Zell wishes to see the reply from M. de Meaux to M. Molanus; if you have it please send it her.' A short time afterwards Leibnitz wrote again to Pelisson.

'I imagine that M. Pirot will not be sorry

* A visionary who was much talked of in Germany at the end of the seventeenth century. In the work 'Die Werke von Leibnitz,' by Onno Klopp.

that Madame la Duchesse de Zell has seen his paper about the Council of Trent, she ought to see the writing of the Bishop of Meaux also. . . Mesdames les Duchesses have read the fourth part of your reflections, which were nearly all new to them.'

Eléonore was of a kind and conciliatory disposition, and doubtless she was more indulgent towards the Catholics than the Electress Sophie or Leibnitz. Perhaps when she conscientiously examined her beliefs she felt some doubts on the subject of her faith. When one sees her zeal for the refugees, it is difficult to believe the insinuations that Leibnitz and Sophie made about her in their correspondence. Nevertheless it is possible that she may at one time have contemplated returning to Catholicism.

On the 4th of April, 1703, Sophie wrote to Leibnitz: 'The Duchess de Zell is confirmed in all the points of the Catholic religion. I have seen the letter that she has received from the Dominican friar who is with the King of Sweden, and also her reply. This correspondence originated with Bonac,* who told the Father that

* Jean-Louis-d'Usson, Marquis de Bonac, ambassador in Sweden, in Spain, and in Constantinople, was sent on a mission by Louis XIV to the Ducs de Brunswick after the peace of Ryswick.

she wore on her arm a portrait of Saint-Père, which was true.' During this time Leibnitz was at Vienna, and he referred to the subject some time afterwards in a letter to Sophie: 'It seems that Madame la Duchesse de Zell approves of Père Wolf's doctrine which he proclaimed here, that one must be Socinian or Papist. But it appears also that the Princess still observes the formula of the reformed religionists and communicates with them.'

These statements were confirmed by Héron in a letter to Louis XIV, written on the 15th of September.

'By the conversation sustained by the Duchess at the table, I believe she is a Catholic, or at all events that she meditates renouncing the reformed religion when she becomes mistress of her actions.' But it is certain that these hesitations were only transitory, since at that time the Duchess de Zell paid the remainder of the three thousand crowns to support the Pastor of the reformed Church.

The interest which the Duchess always felt for her relatives in France, who were persecuted for their religion, is another proof. Thanks to the alliances which her relatives had contracted,

and especially to her sister-in-law, Madame d'Olbreuze (*née de Sainte-Hermine*), who on her mother's side was a niece of Madame de Maintenon ; also to the respect due to her position as Sovereign Princess, Eléonore was often able to intercede in their favour. The correspondence of the Duchess de Zell and of her secretary, M. de Rosemont de Bouccœur, who was a refugee at her Court, also of M. du Vergier de Paisay, with the relatives of the Duchess in France, has been preserved intact in the Records of Hanover. One finds a sad account in them of the vexations which the Protestants endured at the hands of Louis XIV, and proofs of Eléonore's bounty on every page. One day a cousin of hers, M. du Fay de la Taillée, a resident of Poitou, wrote to tell her his wife had been taken to a convent and then to the fortress of Guise ; and that to add to his misfortunes, they took his child, a girl of five years, away from him by force. The Duchess immediately wrote to Gourville, who had been for many years a minister of Louis XIV, and was then a great favourite of the King's, to intercede on her kinsman's behalf, and as the greater part of her cousin's property had been confiscated, and he had great difficulty in edu-

cating his children, she offered to find employment at her Court for one of his daughters.

Another relative also incurred Louis XIV's anger. This was the Chevalier de Gagemont, who, through being the next of kin, succeeded later on to the Olbreuze possessions.

One of Eléonore's cousins, Viscount Prévost de Létorières, afterwards obtained celebrity at Court. But under the pretext that he had corresponded with the refugees at the Court of Zell, he was seized and imprisoned in the Chateau de Saumur. The Duchess de Zell was then staying at Bruchhausen. She immediately endeavoured to procure his liberty, and wrote to the Count de Roucy and to the Marquis de Chamilly. Unfortunately her efforts were in vain, for at this time the war concerning the succession of Spain broke out, and there were hostilities between Louis XIV and the Dukes de Brunswick. Although unable to assist her cousin any further, she wrote and begged him not to think any more of the debt he owed her, as his affairs were much involved, and he would probably have great difficulty in defraying it.

Through the deaths of her brothers and sisters and various relatives, the Duchess de Zell

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had inherited property in Aunis and in Saintonge. After the death of her sister, the Countess de Reuss, in 1688, Eléonore acquired through the contracts passed in France, besides the titles of Duchess de Brunswick, de Lunenburg, and de Zell, those of Dame d'Olbreuze, Antiguy, Bellevue, la Brune en Mauzé, la Richaudière, le Fief de Vallent, la Chapelle, etc., all small fiefs belonging to various inheritances. Several offers of purchase were addressed to her. She always refused to part with her property in France. Although so far away she seemed to wish to preserve these strips of land in memory of her youth.

It was not an easy task to look after this property, and the Duchess did not gain much from it. At the most she only had some thousand crowns over, when she had defrayed the expenses incidental to the estate, and distributed a certain amount of charity to the poor. M. de la Taillée, l'Abbé de Sainte-Hermine, then the Chevalier de Gagemont, and another relation, M. de Saint-Georges de Marsay, were employed in turns to superintend the management of her estates. During the years which followed the revocation of the Edict of Nantes it was a source

of perpetual worry to her—menaces of seizure for justice not rendered, trials relating to the succession of the relatives of the Duchess, claims of tithes from curés, herds of cattle belonging to the peasants devastating the woods, ravages by poachers, claims of the neighbouring monks, etc. One would have said that all the people in the country complained aloud against the Huguenots. But when they found that the Duchess had friends at Court, they paid more respect to her property. Louis XIV took care to put an end to these embarrassments. In 1702 he confiscated by l'Intendant de la Rochelle the property of the Duchess, using as a pretext for doing so the hostile attitude assumed by the Dukes de Brunswick, and he would not make any restoration until peace was signed.

In 1703 Georges-Guillaume celebrated the anniversary of his 80th birthday. There were public rejoicings. Gold and silver medals were distributed, stamped with an effigy of the Duke and Duchess. Although still active and able to hunt occasionally, the Duke de Zell was approaching his end. In 1704 he went to Hanover. This was one of the last journeys he undertook.

Before his death he took precautions to insure

for the woman who had occupied such a considerable place in his life, a future worthy of her rank.

Eléonore never felt secure in the position which fortune had made for her. Judging the conduct of the Court of Hanover towards herself and her child as a test of the future, not a day passed but she contemplated with dread the arrival of the moment when the Duke de Zell being dead she would find herself and her daughter at the mercy of the Elector. The correspondence of the agents of Louis XIV at the Court of Zell record her anxiety in several instances. In 1671, although Sophie-Dorotheé was only a child, the Duke Ernest-Auguste and the Duchess Sophie's intense hatred and scorn for her, caused her parents to obtain the protection of Louis XIV for her. He accorded to the young Princess letters of naturalisation and permission to retire to France. Since the negotiations which preceded the Peace of Zell, Eléonore had also spoken to Rébénac of the possibility of establishing herself in France. Rébénac wrote to Pomponne on the 7th of February 1679: 'M. le Duc de Zell has begged me to ask your Majesty's protection for his wife,

in the event of her surviving him.' During the years which followed Sophie-Dorothée's imprisonment, how to find a safe retreat for herself when she became a widow, was one of the Duchess de Zell's constant cares. Héron wrote to Louis XIV on the 22nd of March 1699: 'The Duchess de Zell has asked the Duke Antoine-Ulric if he would receive her in his States and protect her daughter after the Duke de Zell's death. He replied in general terms which were not quite a refusal. He has told me of her request in confidence; also that he would not receive her unless your Majesty accords both mother and daughter your protection. He feels convinced that they intend to go to France and renounce their religion and live there without being a burden to your Majesty. He does not think the young Princess is as guilty as they have made her appear, and says they have taken good care to ruin her reputation. He is much attached to both mother and daughter, because the latter was to have married his eldest son who was killed at Phillippsbourg. He thinks he will not receive justice from the Duke of Hanover, if he puts any impediment in his way after the Duke de Zell's death by taking the part which the

Duchess may decide upon since the Duke of Hanover's authority over his wife ceased when sentence of dissolution of his marriage was pronounced, upon the charge that she had deserted her husband.'

The King replied to this on the 2nd of April: 'If the Duchess de Zell and her daughter, the Duchess d'Hanover, decide to settle in my kingdom after the Duke de Zell's death, and they profess the Catholic religion, I will accord them my protection with pleasure. So you can reciprocate the good sentiments which the Duke Antoine-Ulric has uttered for them.'

These extracts are from the political correspondence of the reign of Louis XIV, and prove in some degree how Eléonore dreaded the day when she would find herself, unprotected, face to face with Georges-Louis. The Duke de Zell had his anxieties also on this subject. We have seen the precautions he took to assure to Eléonore her dowry. Nevertheless, he did not think it just to ask a stranger to protect his wife and daughter after his death.

The fortune which he left to the Duchess was composed of the revenues of several districts situated in the north of his States. To reconcile

her to her little kingdom, and also to remove her as far as possible from the Court of Hanover, he had a palace built at Lunebourg, to be used as her residence during her widowhood. This building was commenced in 1692, and the Duke ordered the Italian architect, who designed the Castle, to go to Paris first, and to copy the style of architecture then in fashion. One can judge by the large square house which one sees at Lunebourg that the result was not satisfactory.

The Duke de Zell requested the Duchess to make her will before his death, to insure her wishes being fulfilled. Then he promised his approbation, and added a sum of twenty thousand crowns for her to distribute in legacies.

Thus having satisfactorily arranged his worldly affairs, Georges-Guillaume was ready to die. During the summer of 1705 he took cold whilst hunting, and never recovered. Although he had not been a religious man, he yielded to Eléonore's wish, and received the Communion just before his death. He expired on the 28th of August at Wienhausen, in that little castle where he had passed so many happy hours with Eléonore, and which was one of his last gifts to her.

CHAPTER IX

THE DOWAGER DUCHESS DE ZELL

ACCORDING to Rochefoucauld, death is like the sun, no man can look at it steadily. But it is certain that strong-minded persons who are consoled by religious hopes can contemplate death calmly, regarding it as an imperceptible transition between two existences, from one fragile and vain, to another strong and lasting.

The last years of the Duchess de Zell are an example of calm tranquillity. For a long time, gradually and carefully, she made preparations for the sad visitor, Death. And when her hour came she passed away so peacefully, and had such confidence in the future, that those who had

through her life persecuted her with their hatred could not restrain their admiration and envy.

The separation from her husband was a cruel trial to Eléonore. Excepting on rare occasions they had always been together. At Zell, in his travels, in his hunting expeditions she had always been near him.

The numerous necessary measures which followed the Duke de Zell's death, the letters of notification, the answers to messages of condolence, and the removal of her little Court from Zell to Lunebourg, were so many occupations for Eléonore that they prevented her from fully realising the extent of her loss; but when she left the royal residence, which for the space of forty years had been embellished by her husband's and her own loving care with so many objects of art and beauty, and was now so deserted and unfurnished; and when she found herself living in a little town, far from her daughter, surrounded by high walls, and in a house which although spacious was cold and sad, she gave full vent to her sorrow. Her health was impaired, and at one time they thought she would not long survive her husband.

Nevertheless, in the beginning of September 1706, she rallied again. One of the first means of consolation was the news of the intended marriage between her grand-daughter, Sophie-Dorothée, her daughter's youngest child, and the Prince Royal of Prussia. It was celebrated at Hanover, and the Duchess de Zell attended the wedding. The young Princess's mother, the Princess d'Ahlden, was refused permission to witness the ceremony, and the news of her daughter's marriage came to her through a casual source. Doubtless under the circumstances Eléonore's feelings were very painful during her visit to that haughty and always hostile Court, but she accomplished this journey as a duty.

On her return to Lunebourg, she resumed the monotonous existence which she had interrupted for a few days.

The brilliant Court of Zell had ceased to exist. At Lunebourg the Duchess had only retained one gentleman, M. de Vause, as master of the ceremonies, one lady-in-waiting, the Marquise de la Rochegiffart, and two maids of honour, Mesdemoiselles de Melville and de Staffhorst. Casual visitors, and only on rare occasions, broke the calm of that retired life.

The Duke Antoine-Ulric, who had never ceased to testify his affection for the Duchess in her joys and in her sorrows, was the first to visit her. He came in July 1709 with the Prince de Wolfenbüttel, his heir. Some months later, on the 8th of November, the Prince Royal of Prussia brought his bride to visit her grandmother. Two days after their departure the Electress Sophie arrived. Had she any motive for undertaking this long journey from Hanover to Lunebourg, or was the proceeding simply one which etiquette demanded? It would be hard to say. On the 11th of November she arrived at mid-day, stayed a few hours and left. In December 1716 the Duke and Duchess de Blankenbourg went also to Lunebourg.

Under these circumstances, the little castle of Lunebourg was the scene of some excitement. On the arrival and departure of the royal visitors, cannon was fired, and bells rung. During the visit, serenades took place under the castle windows.

An inventory of the apartments of Lunebourg, which is preserved in the records of Hanover, enables us to give a short description of the interior of that little Court. The apartments of the Duchess were on the first floor, and were hung

with grey cloth, the furniture, being covered in the same. In her bedroom there were objects of art; a portrait of Georges-Guillaume, and some china vases on the mantelpiece. In the audience chamber were hung six pieces of tapestry, worked in silk and in gold and silver, and representing the twelve months of the year. Couches in crimson velvet, a massive silver table, a certain number of objects of art, and a few portraits completed the furniture. The dining-room was ornamented with valuable tapestry, so was the ante-chamber, the former would only accommodate twenty guests. There were six apartments on the ground floor, which, with others on the second floor, were hung with damask and stamped velvet. These rooms were occupied by the guests of the Duchess.

It was there, in the centre of the town, with its small narrow streets and its archaic construction, surrounded by a little world of peasants and trades' people, whom she only knew principally through alleviating their distress, that the Duchess de Zell spent her widowhood. Far from the *fêtes* of the Court of Hanover, and in fact, from any kind of amusement.

The Frenchmen who were attached to her

Court, first M. de Vaux and later on M. de Paisay, frequented the society of savants, connoisseurs in books and objects of art, and the Duchess was able to converse freely with them in French. At that period, Lunebourg possessed an academy and was a centre of learning, whilst the neighbouring town of Hambourg was occupied entirely with commerce.

The Duchess always reserved part of her time for her daughter. Since she had resided at Lunebourg the visits to Ahlden had become long and painful journeys. Uffenbach, who at that time travelled a good deal in Lunebourg, said he would never forget ‘*Die Herzen und Kopfstoesse*,’ and the road traced hap-hazard in the midst of that rude country. It needed all the devotedness of the poor mother, to induce her to undertake the fatigue of those journeys at seventy years of age. She never ceased conveying regularly to Sophie-Dorothée, the consolation of her religious counsel, and this alone rendered the monotony of the prison endurable to its tenant. The Duchess sent books, and when she could not visit her, wrote daily, forwarding the poor captive news of her children and of her relatives, in fact forgetting nothing that would cause some distraction.

In 1714 the Elector Georges-Louis succeeded to the throne of Great Britain, by virtue of the law of succession of 1701. Eléonore made another attempt to procure her daughter's liberty. In England they expressed great interest about the Princess, who, instead of sharing the throne with her husband, was imprisoned in a tower in Germany. The Prince of Wales and the Queen of Prussia interceded with their father on their mother's behalf. But nothing would overcome the King of England's savage resentment. The Prince was heard to declare openly that, if he succeeded to the throne, one of his first steps would be to bring Sophie-Dorothée to England, and confer on her the honours due to her as Queen-mother ; he had a portrait of his mother taken in Court dress in his apartments. George I was always under the influence of his mistresses and of Bernstorff, who was the friend of his favourites ; and he became more sullen and whimsical than ever. He never crossed the threshold of his son's house, and he forbade his courtiers doing so.

During her stay at Lunebourg the Duchess superintended the details of her little Court and occupied herself in looking after her own affairs.

The King of Prussia, her grand-daughter's husband, and the Princess of Wales, her grand-son's wife, occasionally exchanged letters with her. She also corresponded with a few members of royalty and with some of her relatives in France, and carefully attended to the welfare of her dependants, who were fully cognisant of her kind and sympathetic disposition, and confided freely in her.

She made inquiries at Zell, at Lunebourg, and in the villages dependent on her property in Olbreuze respecting the poor, and sent them relief in proportion to their wants. The age and the complaint of each one, the number of their children and their ages, in a word anything that rendered these poor people worthy of interest, was by her wish carefully reported to her.

In 1707, Louis XIV, made restitution to the Duchess de Zell of her property situated in France. The news was communicated to the Duchess at Lunebourg, through the Countess de Mailly, who had received a letter from Chamillard. Thus the poor Duchess was enabled to still further extend her charities. One knows what distress there was in France in 1709. Although Eléonore had been absent from Saintonge for fifty years,

and had become German through her marriage, she was no sooner informed of the misery of the inhabitants of Olbreuze, then she put a fourth of the revenue of her estates there at their disposal.

MM. de Gagemont and de Marsey were the managers of the Olbreuze estates. They addressed their letters generally to the Duchess, but sometimes to M. de Paisay. The affairs were easily settled, as Eléonore was determined there should be no unpleasantness. She shut her eyes to the thefts of Couppet, her 'intendant,' also to the exaggerated pretensions of the good curés of the neighbourhood, who were more occupied in the care of things temporal than things spiritual.

The Duchess did not retain the administration of Olbreuze for long. Little by little she ceded the entire property to her relatives of Poitou. On the 28th of March, 1716, she wrote to M. de la Taillée: 'My cousin, I am very sorry your affairs are in such a bad state. I am unable to assist you much, having divided the revenue of my property in Olbreuze into five parts, of which M. de Gagemont has one, his sister another, Madame de Vaux-Vilandr  one, and the poor dependants in the place one. I reserved the fifth for the repairs of the house. If it would be

any accommodation to you, I will give you the latter share with pleasure, and each one must contribute towards the repairs to prevent the house from falling into ruin. I support several refugees in Holland, and amongst them your aunt, Mdle. Martel; and I have also several people dependent on me in this country, so you can understand, my cousin, that it debars me from assisting the relations whom I have in your country, in any other way than through property in Olbreuze.'

Mdme. de Montalembert died a short time afterwards, and the following year the Duchess altered the arrangements. She wrote to M. de Gagemont on the 26th of October 1717: 'My cousin, I told you some time ago, that I gave the revenue of my property of Olbreuze, one share to Mdme. de Vaux-Montalembert, my relative, one part to M. de la Taillée, also my relative, and the two other parts to you and Mdle. de Gagemont. As since then Madame de Vaux is dead, I wish her son, M. Alexis Montalembert, to have the portion destined for his mother, without power to divide it amongst his brothers. You will see that this is carried out, and I trust each one of you will remember the poor.'

Thus Eléonore gave up bit by bit all her worldly possessions and prepared to meet her Supreme Judge.

A day came when the journeys from Lunebourg to Ahlden exceeded the Duchess's strength. The Court of Hanover had migrated to England; the Electress-Sophie was dead; the castle of Zell was nearer to Sophie-Dorothee's prison, and was uninhabited. The Duchess de Zell obtained permission from the King-Elector to reside there. In the course of the year 1717, she moved her little Court once more.

It was at this castle she passed her last years, there the sad afflictions of age overtook her, and left her almost sightless. It was there that she traced in a vigorous hand, and in characters large, in spite of her blindness, the testament which conveyed legacies to her friends and faithful servants. During her last years she increased the wages of all her servants. One could see that the poor Duchess wished to give away nearly all she possessed. It is very probable that several of those round her found means to excite her pity. For Sophie-Dorothee, notwithstanding her great desire to fulfil all her mother's last requests, could not avoid mentioning after her

mother's death 'the bad uses and abuses they had made of her mother's kindness and generosity.'

In the year 1720 the alarms were continual respecting the Duchess's health. The Duchess d'Orleans wrote to the Raugrave Louise on the 16th of June, 1720: 'I am surprised that the Princess of Wales has not written to tell me of the Duchess de Zell's death. That makes me think the event has not yet taken place.' And the haughty Palatine, who had never forgiven the *mésalliance*, added: 'Why did she not die fifty years ago, that would have averted several misfortunes.' All the secret of the wicked, spiteful calumnies uttered by her and the Electress Sophie are contained in these last words.

Two years later, on the 5th of February 1722, the Duchess de Zell breathed her last.

Her later years, and her resigned and tranquil death, were like all the acts of her life, food for reflection for those who had never missed an opportunity of blaming her. Even the Duchess d'Orleans could not withhold a tribute of respect. 'The Duchess de Zell had a beautiful death, God grant mine may resemble it.' And before she uttered any more expressions, either of pride or

hatred, she added: 'The Duchess de Zell possibly may have been possessed of fine qualities.' This was a significant avowal from the lips of a woman who had always been one of Eléonore's bitterest critics.

Thus the lovely maid of honour of the Princess de Tarente, the majestic Duchess de Zell, the unfortunate mother of Sophie-Dorothée, was no more. Attaining grandeur and power through an unexpected turn of fortune's wheel, she naturally had enemies. Amongst them were all those who dissapproved of the *mésalliance*, or rather to speak more exactly, all those who saw in her an obstacle to their ambitious projects. Outside these few malicious voices, history speaks of her only in praise.

Saint-Simon said: 'Notwithstanding the inequality of her marriage, which was never approved in Germany, her virtue and her conduct have made her loved and respected by all the House of Brunswick, and by her son-in-law, the King of England.' The '*Chronique de Rethmeier*,' which was printed at Brunswick a short time after her death, judges her in these terms: 'The Duchess de Zell was a woman of

superior intelligence and remarkable virtue.' Neigebaur attempted to describe the Duchess de Zell. He had not consulted a record for thirty years, he had not seen the various publications which in later years have made much of an existence which it was sought to ignore, yet he discovered all the precious qualities of the Princess d'Ahliden's mother: 'She was an example of purity of manners, very rare in that time, and her influence over Georges-Guillaume and her Court was most beneficial.' Lastly, Vehse, the scandalous chronicler of the Court of Germany, was also obliged to acknowledge that the Duchess de Zell's reputation was spotless.

The Duchess de Zell was buried at midnight, on the 11th of February without pomp or ceremony. In her will she expressed a wish that her funeral should be as simple as possible. M. de Rheden the Grand Echanson was sent from Hanover to represent the Elector. Twelve pages carried torches before the hearse; her remains were deposited in the Church of Zell, which was draped in black for six months afterwards.

They opened the Duchess's will in June, in the presence of General de Malortie and the

Bailiffs Chappuzeau and Ludemann, Sophie-Dorothee's Attorneys, the Conseiller Intime Ludewig representing the Queen of Prussia, the conseiller Hanoverian Helmholdt being proxy for the Prince of Wales.

Thus as she had before arranged with Georges-Guillaume, the Duchess de Zell left to her grandchildren the Prince of Wales and the Queen of Prussia, the greater part of her property, reserving the use of it for their mother during her life time. She bequeathed in all to Sophie-Dorothee a capital of 60,000 crowns, the property of Olbreuze, her precious stones and jewels, and her furniture and plate. Besides this she left nearly 60,000 crowns in legacies, of which one part consisted of the sum of 20,000 crowns reserved in her will, and the other was due to economies exercised during the last years of her life.

Amongst the Duchess's relations, Mdme. de Bulow received 2,000 crowns, M. de Paisay Monroy, 6,000 ; his son 4,000 ; Major General du Breuil de Sarragan, a cousin to the Duchess de Zell, 6,000, with a house situated in the town of Zell, M. de Wittorf had 2,000 crowns, Mdles. de Staffhorst and de Melville, 4,000 each ; Mdme. de Sansay, who was the Duchess's god-daughter

had 1,000. The four lady's maids, her steward, and various other members of her household had 15,000 crowns divided amongst them. The Duchess made another gift of 3,000 crowns to the reformed Church of Zell. The pastor, the poor of the Catholic, Reformed and Lutheran Churches, were not forgotten. In the town of Zell alone, three hundred and forty-two persons were recipients of the Duchess's generosity.

The inventory taken at her death and preserved in the records of Hanover, contains a list of her jewels, plate, furniture, tapestry, porcelain, and china ornaments, carriages, books, objects of art in her apartments, and also of several costumes in her wardrobe, all denoted the Duchess's delicate and refined taste—qualities which were very rare at that period.

We have never come across a document which has described the impression that her mother's death made on Sophie-Dorothée, but it is impossible to doubt that it was a terrible blow to her. They had always been so united, and the Duchess and her child were drawn still closer to one another by misfortune, and by the mutual antipathy which they inspired in certain members

of their family ; for nearly thirty years they had lived in the dearest intimacy.

Now Sophie-Dorothée was left entirely alone, she consoled herself by executing her mother's last wishes. As she was always imprisoned at Ahlden, she conducted her affairs by writing. She held a long correspondence with her two attorneys, Chappuzeau and Ludemann, and tried to prevent embezzlements even in the minutest details. She maintained the same state of affairs at Olbreuze that her mother had established. The Chevalier de Gagemont, who was then a captain in the Duke d'Orléans' regiment of dragoons, was selected to be her representative in France.

Following her mother's example in all things, she also found in religion consolation for her sorrows, and in the distribution of charity, contributing to the happiness of others, oblivious of her own troubles. And every day she wrote down the expenditure of her Court as an occupation during her long hours of solitude. One sees in the Records of Hanover, entire books covered with Sophie-Dorothée's firm majestic writing. Sad delusion ! The King of England's imprisoned wife calls her prison '*sa résidence*,' and the list of her charities '*ses menus plaisirs*.' One can follow

line by line the monotonous description of the poor Princess's life. On the 18th of October 1726, the usually firm hand which traced these lines, seems already to tremble with a warning of her coming death. At each word, at each letter, one feels the effort of a dying will. Then on the 22nd—nothing . . . Sophie-Dorothée never left her bed again. On the 13th of November, at eleven o'clock in the night, the jailors of Ahlden ceased their watch. Sophie-Dorothée was no more.

The State of Hanover ordered a public funeral for the Princess, who was doubly united to their country by her birth and her marriage. The King of England thought differently. He was not sufficiently revenged on the woman who, in spite of the stain on her birth, he had condescended to marry; and who, driven at bay by his scorn and insults, had dared to brave him. He was near his own end, but his hatred would exact a last satisfaction.

He declared Sophie-Dorothée was a stranger to him, and he stopped the public funeral, and would not allow her body to receive the honours due to the remains of a Princess. He ordered the mother's and daughter's coffins to be made alike, and no mention to be put on either of the

brilliant title which the chance of a day had brought them. In the Church of Zell one finds the monuments of the Dukes and Duchesses of Brunswick. The Duke Georges and his wife, Anne-Eléonore de Hesse, and their son, Georges-Guillaume, are all there. And on either side of the Duke de Zell there is a vacant space hollowed out in the wall. In the inventories taken after the Duchess de Zell's death, unnumbered portraits are mentioned of those who preceded her in the succession. Ludemann and Chappuzeau, whose families had been received by the Duchess, knew all Eléonore's relations, and yet not one of these is mentioned by name. Only Kings and Princes are honoured with a place in these documents drawn up by order of the King of England. The hatred and scorn of the Electress Sophie had descended in full to her son.

In 1727 the remains of the Princess d' Ahlden were transferred to Zell, and there rest both mother and daughter. Around them are displayed the magnificent sepulchres of the illustrious Princes of the House of Guelph, resplendent in gold and silver. But there are two blots on these funereal splendours; two simple lead coffins, without ornament or description of any kind.

History has avenged George I. The sympathetic character of the Duchesse de Zell, and the interesting figure of her daughter, guilty perhaps, but so touching in her repentance and in her lonely captivity, have left a more lasting remembrance than the warlike successes of the sovereigns by whom they are surrounded. With such titles as these in the eyes of prosperity, what good would accrue from blazoned descriptions and monuments of marble? When a visitor descends into the vaults of the Church of Zell, he scarcely notices the magnificent sepulchres in the gloomy archway. He goes straight to these two modest coffins which recall such bitter sufferings. He knows that there sleep the mother and grandmother of kings, that she, who bequeathed to her grandson the great Frederick, that heritage more precious than all the gold in the world, her keen, clear, brilliant wit so peculiarly a trait of her own, lies in dust before him. In presence of these inanimate remains one feels a deep emotion, an emotion that the graves of the Georges and Sophies would never inspire. Posterity has also its hatreds, more lasting perhaps than that of princes or politicians. It has avenged the memories of *Eléonore* and *Sophie-Dorothée*.

A P P E N D I X

Correspondence concerning the Duchess Eleonore de Brunswick Zell



I

DUKE JEAN-FRÉDÉRIC DE BRUNSWICK LUNEBOURG,
to ELÉONORE DESMIER D'OLBREUZE.

AUGSBOURG, May 25th, 1664.

To Mdlle. D'Olbreuze.

If I did not write to you until I reached Venice, you would have thought, Mademoiselle, that it needed the sight of your friends to remind me of you, and I should be sorry to give you so bad an opinion of my memory. Having once seen you, even the most absent-minded

cannot forget. Your companion, whom I shall see in eight or ten days, will tell you the news, and you know her too well to suspect her of bad faith. In the meanwhile I entreat you to believe that I am only too pleased to have another opportunity of telling you that no one holds you in more esteem and affection than your servant,

J. FR.

(From a copy preserved in the Royal Library of Hanover. *Zeitschrift des Historischen Vereins für Niedersachsen*, 1882, p. 317 et suiv.)

II

ÉLÉONORE DESMIER D'OLBREUZE to the DUKE
JEAN-FRÉDÉRIC DE BRUNSWICK LUNEBOURG.

THE HAGUE, June 30th, 1664.

MONSEIGNEUR,—I have received with due respect and gratitude the mark of honour which your Serene Highness has accorded me, in sending me a souvenir from a place where the bad roads and inconveniences of travelling would make one feel more inclined to rest, than to indite a letter to a person who has no right to expect such an attention. I have asked my friend to convey to your Serene Highness my appreciation of so

much kindness, and I pray her to assist me in convincing your Highness that no one respects you more than I, Monseigneur. — From your Serene Highness's very humble and obedient servant,

ÉLÉONORE DESMIER D'OLBREUZE.

To His Serene Highness
Monseigneur le Duc Jean-Frédéric de Brunswick
Lunebourg, at Venice.

(Original is in the Royal Library at Hanover.
Zeitschrift des Historischen Vereins für Neider-
sachsen, 1882.)

III

The DUKE JEAN-FRÉDÉRIC DE BRUNSWICK to
ÉLÉONORE D'OLBREUZE.

(Not dated. In all probability in July, 1664).

Judging from your letter you must be staying in a very ceremonious place. If you have lost your natural gaiety between the Hague and Cassel you are to be pitied. I do not doubt, Mdle., but that your good humour will return to you. From the tenour of your letter to your companion, you seem to be enjoying yourself very much. Here all is quiet, for amusements are rare. You are missed by everyone who

knows you, and by many who have not that pleasure. If you were with us the time would pass more agreeably. I will not presume to say more, beyond assuring you that if I cannot affirm that there is no one who desires your presence here more passionately than I, I can at least assure you that no one is more devoted to you than

J. F.

To Mdlle. d'Olbreuze.

(Copy preserved in the Royal Library of Hanover. *Zeitschrift des Historischen Vereins für Neidersachsen*, 1879, p. 350.)

IV

ELÉONORE D'OLBREUZE to the DUKE JEAN-FRÉDÉRIC.

THE HAGUE, August 15, 1664.

I do not know what I can have written to your Serene Highness that caused you to imagine I was not in a good humour, but I am certain of one thing, when I was overwhelmed with grief on my arrival here, it was immediately dispelled by the mark of honour which I received from your Highness's remembrance of me. All the same, Monseigneur, I cannot prove

to your Highness my gratitude for your kindness. Would that I could go to Venice to pay you a thousand respects. I should be only too happy to be with your Royal Highness and many others who are there besides. I think I could succeed where my companion has failed, in proving by respect, obedience and submission, that I am your Serene Highness' most humble and devoted servant.

ELÉONORE D'OLBREUZE.

To His Serene Highness the Duke Jean
Frédéric de Brunswick Lunebourg, at Venice.

(Original is in the Royal Library of Hanover.
Zeitschrift des Historischen Vereins für Niedersachsen, 1882).

V

THE DUKE JEAN-FRÉDÉRIC to ELÉONORE.

VENICE, September 21, 1664.

I will not expatiate on the accident which has happened to your companion,* it is sufficient to tell you she has quite recovered from its effects, and could not be in better health. In the present state of affairs you are much more to be pitied

* Mlle. de la Mothe was thrown out of a carriage.

than she, and the illness which abounds at the Hague makes us all anxious on your behalf. I own, Mademoiselle, that I am troubled, and you are the cause of my uneasiness. I heartily wish that you were in a state to tell me that you entertain towards me, in some degree, the great regard I have always had for you. If I could apply to myself what you wrote me about the tour in Italy, your wish would be already granted; you have only to explain yourself seriously on this subject, Mademoiselle, and soon, as I shall be leaving here ere long. You should not draw back; you will find no one who reciprocates your sentiments more thoroughly than

J. F.

To Mdle. d'Olbreuze

(Copy preserved in the Royal Library at Hanover. *Zeitschrift des Hist. Vereins für Neidersachsen*, 1882.)

VI

ÉLÉONORE D'OLBREUZE to the DUKE JEAN-FRÉDÉRIC.

THE HAGUE, December 20, 1664.

On my arrival here, I received a letter which your Serene Highness did me the honour to write

to me from Venice more than two months ago ; Madame Carisius had kept it during that time, and I think she would have gone on keeping it all her life, if I had passed mine at Breda. I do not know in what manner I can testify my gratitude for your Serene Highness's kindness, and assure you of my deep respect ; but, Monseigneur, I should be unworthy of your gracious attentions if, after your promise to me, to place me in a position of importance near your wife, I accept that of mistress, I was waiting for your Serene Highness's marriage to enable you to place me under your wife's protection as you promised.

I hope your Serene Highness does not believe all the things that have been said to my disadvantage. They are all untrue although they emanate from a princess. It is my most earnest wish that your Serene Highness should consider me a good woman, and be persuaded that no one is more zealous and faithful in your service than your humble and obedient servant,

D'OLBREUZE.

They expect Monseigneur le Duc Georges-Guillaume here every day. All the ladies who were driven away by the plague have returned except Mdme. la Comtesse de Orne, who has not

been to the Hague at all this winter. I have been unable to repeat to her the complimentary message with which your Serene Highness commissioned me, because I have not seen her.

To His Serene Highness

The Duke Jean-Frédéric de Brunswick Lunebourg.

(Original in the Royal Library of Hanover.—*Zeitschrift des Historischen Verein für Neider-sachsen*, 1883.)

VII

The DUCHESS ELÉONORE DE BRUNSWICK ZELL to
the MARÉCHAL D'ESTRADES.

ZELL, September 10, 1676.

MONSIEUR,—Now that I have recovered from my confinement, I feel I ought to thank you for your kind sympathy during my illness. Be assured had I died you would have lost one who thoroughly appreciates your valuable qualities, and who would be only too pleased to render you any service here. I have shown your letter to my husband, and he wishes me to express a thousand thanks on his behalf for the kind things you say of him. I wish he would follow your excellent advice, then my happiness would be complete.

It is a great trouble to me when I see him leave for the war, and I am frequently subjected to anxiety on this account. I was much grieved a few days ago to hear of the death of Prince de Bronsswi Wolfenbüttel, who was affianced to my daughter. He was killed at the siege of Filisbourg, and he is universally regretted. He was liked and esteemed by all who knew him. I wish I could congratulate you on a subject which I dare not mention in this letter. Believe me I take a great interest in all that concerns you.—I am, Monsieur, your very humble servant,

ELÉONORE, DUCHESS DE ZELL.

To Monsieur le Maréchal d'Estrades, at Nimègue.

(Original.—Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Correspondence of Brunswick.)

VIII

The DUCHESS ELÉONORE DE BRUNSWICK ZELL to
the MARÉCHAL D'ESTRADES.

October 12, 1676.

Let me assure you, Monsieur, that your friends are pleased at the turn affairs have taken, though I dare not announce my satisfaction. Be persuaded, however, that I have your interest at

heart. I am in trouble ; four days ago M. le Duc de Zell left me to rejoin his troops. He hopes to return soon. I should be so pleased if he would only follow your excellent advice, which I have done all in my power to induce him to do, as it is my greatest wish to see him join the King's side, and detach himself from those with whom he is engaged. I hope you and I will have the satisfaction of seeing things arrange themselves as we wish, etc.

(Copy—Archives of the Ministry of Foreign affairs. Ibidem.)

IX

From the same to the same.

ZELL, December 29, 1676.

I am much obliged to you, Monsieur, for your kind participation in the joy I feel at my husband's return. I cannot understand how you can have heard so soon that he is not satisfied with his allies. *Entre nous*, Monsieur, I can see he resents interference from them, and I tell you in confidence, that now is your opportunity to make some arrangement with him before others step in. I know he has great respect for the King, and he

wishes for peace. Let me know what means you will employ, and if you think he can assist you. I wish we could have a personal interview on this subject, one can explain so much better in talking than by letter, and come to a determination more rapidly. I am telling you everything openly, and treating you as a friend ; I trust you will respect my confidence, and believe that I am your very faithful servant,

ELÉONORE, D. DE B. ET Z.

(Original.—Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Ibidem.)

X

From the same to the same.

Not dated (February, 1677.)

MONSIEUR,—I have received your letter of the 27th of January. It gave both my husband and myself much pleasure. We are sending a person in whom we place implicit confidence, and who understands the Duke's sentiments. He will go under the pretence of finding Dr du Fey at Crananbourg, which is two leagues from Nimègue, and you will join him there. I hope, now that you have taken the affair in hand, it

will succeed. I shall be transported with joy if it does ; I have always been loyal to my King and Sovereign. I ought to tell you beforehand, Monsieur, that my husband will not join in anything which is against the interests of the Empire, therefore I beg you to be careful. He has refused to assist his nephew, the King of Denmark, with the four thousand men he required. Great proposals are being made to the Duke by the Emperor, who has offered him the post of General and the command of the troops of the allies against France. The Duke has replied that his affairs were not in a state to enable him to come to a decision. I beseech you not to delay matters, and rest assured that M. le Duc de Zell and myself place confidence in you. If you succeed I shall be extremely glad. I trust you believe me when I say that you have not a relative or a friend who is more zealous in your service than myself.

(Signature as before.)

XI

From the same to the same.

February 9th, 1677.

You can rely, Monsieur, on the discretion of

the person who gives you this note, he is my husband's Secretary of State. He will inform you of the Duke's sentiments and his wishes, and the conditions which he proposes. I hope all will end successfully, and that you believe me entirely at your service.

(Signature as before.)

XII

From the same to the same.

February 23, 1677.

I received your letter yesterday morning, you know by what means. M. le Duc de Zell will send no one until he is sure of the King's answer on the three propositions which he has made, and you cannot expect him to send a person with full authority to decide anything until one knows something of the position. For this reason let me know exactly the King's wishes on the subject, to enable us, if possible, to come to an understanding. I entreat you to be careful that nothing is made known at Paris. I have heard from there that they are aware of my first letters. M. Rousseau* has made us

* French Minister at Hanover.

several offers of assistance, all of which my husband and self have declined. He resides in a place where the surroundings are not such as to inspire one with confidence, and I beg you not to make any communication to him of what is passing in this neighbourhood. It is of vital importance to us that the secret should be kept. M. le Duc de Zell has not replied to the Emperor's proposals, nor to those of the King of Denmark and William of Orange. He is waiting to hear from the King before he gives a definite answer.

(Signature as before.)

XIII

From the same to the same.

March 13, 1677.

I have good reason to believe that my suppositions respecting M. Rousseau were correct, and that he will be employed himself in this matter. Four days ago he made me an underhand proposal about the three articles of which we have spoken. The one of the three points which you consider the most difficult, he thinks the easiest, and on that account he explains the

advantages of this treaty. I would not enter into the subject with him until I have heard from you, and I made no reply to all that has been said to me on the matter. I wish you would send me an answer quickly and tell me your opinion, because M. le Duc de Zell is pressed for a reply on all sides. I am entirely at your service.

(Signature as before.)

XIV

From the same to the same.

March 15, 1677.

MONSIEUR,—I have received your letter in which you send M. le Duc de Zell the answer on the three points which he has proposed; he cannot consent to lose all his conquests, which have cost him so much trouble and expense, for a simple subsidy, and renounce by that all the large annuities in arrear which are due to him, and which his allies promise to make good if he will join them in this campaign. I must own to you that I thought the King would consider it to his advantage to detach M. le Duc de Zell from the party to whom he is at present united, and that the Duke would have been allowed to retain the

land he has conquered as it borders on his own States. The Duke feels quite sure of his troops, who are well disposed towards their General, especially those in Lower Saxony. They are quite prepared to support him. I regret that what I so earnestly wish is postponed. Kindly keep the matter secret, there are so many reports already circulated about the affair.

(Signature as before.)

XV

From the same to the same.

April 16, 1677.

You know I have always told you that if you want to make a treaty with the Duke de Zell you should do so without delay, because offers are being made to him on all sides, and the States of Lower Saxony have joined together to support his army. We have always expected that the King would enter into an explanation about the subsidies, as much for the Duke de Zell as for the Duke de Wolfenbüttel, and now they pretend elsewhere that they are to be given to the Duke of Hanover; also we believed the King would understand the advantage he would gain by pre-

venting another army from joining his enemies. I fear my wishes cannot be realised, for the envoys of the Emperor and of the General States are earnestly soliciting the Duke de Zell to renew a treaty with them, and according to all appearances it will soon be concluded, for it is not likely that the Duke will detach himself from his present allies unless he finds it to his advantage to do so. I am, etc.

(Signature as before.)

XVI

Memorandum of M. DE GRAND-CHAMP in office
at Zell.

M. de Grand-Champ has informed the King that the Duke and Duchess of Zell are favourably inclined towards entering into an alliance with him. His Majesty is pleased at this, as he has always held the Duke in great esteem, and he desires that M. de Grand-Champ should assure the Duke of his regard.

But as a general treaty of peace is so near, it lessens the necessity of an individual treaty. His Majesty without entering into any discussion respecting the conditions which have been

proposed to him at the peace of Mons, orders M. de Grand-Champ to inform the Duke de Zell that His Majesty will derive great satisfaction from entering into an alliance with him, and being in a position to prove his friendship and esteem. The King also wishes to assure the Duchess that he is fully aware of the many proofs she has given of her loyalty in his interests, and he will always continue to regard her in the same sentiments of friendship.

(Copy.—Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs).

XVII

MEMORANDUM in which the King desires that M. de Gourville should write to Mdme. la Duchesse de Zell.

The King thinks it right to inform Mdme. la Duchess de Zell that his Majesty is as favourably disposed towards the Duke de Zell as she could wish. That his Majesty has always esteemed him, and will be pleased to renew his pleasant friendship with the Duke when the war is over.

That his Majesty is sorry to hear that the

Duke desires to retain the provinces which he conquered in Sweden, as his Majesty is pledged by this peace to restore them. That as his Majesty has always desired to maintain the treaty of Westphalia, he received with pleasure the proposal that he should restore all her States to Sweden.

But this he cannot do as long as the Duke de Zell retains the part of his conquests in Sweden, which were acquired by the Peace of Osnabruck, thus his Majesty begs that the Duke de Zell will, for his country's sake and also for the advantages he will gain by a close alliance with his Majesty, renounce these conquests, otherwise a long war must ensue, in which France and Sweden will be united against him.

He will take into consideration that all his Majesty's forces, which are not now occupied against Spain and against Holland, will be ready for this campaign in Germany, and he will have cause to tremble for his own dominions when his Majesty's armies enter the Elector of Brandenburg's territory, whence they proceed to the Rhine; also that in the Peace of Nimègue, which the Emperor proposed, he offered in his own and his allies' names not to assist Sweden's enemies in any manner.

That as France has no other enemies in the rest of the Empire, she can use all her strength by sea as well as by land to help that Crown.

That it will be more advantageous to him to terminate this war by a peace, since if he continues it his States will be irretrievably ruined ; that he cannot expect pecuniary assistance from Spain or Holland, and that whether the Emperor continues war or makes peace, he will not be in a position to help him in either way ; for in the first instance he will be too much occupied in looking after his own affairs to divide his troops ; and in the second, he will be pledged not to give any assistance to Sweden's enemies, conforming with what Spain and the General States have already done.

That the King is equally anxious to convince Sweden and the Duke de Zell of his wish to accommodate them, but he cannot entertain any proposition which will cause the former the loss of territory.

M. de Gourville having explained that His Majesty cannot ask Sweden to cede any part of the provinces which she exposed to risk on his behalf, testifies that in any other way he will be pleased to accommodate the Duke de Zell.

The only way to recompense the Duke for what he will give up, will be the offer of a certain sum of money. M. de Gourville will explain that His Majesty could make a grant in Sweden's favour which would satisfy that crown, but as such a proceeding would perhaps increase the Duke de Zell's demands, he begs to explain that under the present circumstances the Duke ought to be reasonable, and consider the offer as a spontaneous one on the part of His Majesty, and await the proposals which will be made to him.

These are the reasons and conditions of which His Majesty approves, and which M. de Gourville will present to M. le Duc de Zell through the medium of Mdme. la Duchesse de Zell. They are to be shown to the Bishop of Osnabruck also.

Written at Versailles, October 26th, 1678.

XVIII

GOURVILLE to the DUCHESS ELÉONORE DE
BRUNSWICK ZELL.

VERSAILLES, November 22, 1678.

Monsieur de Pomponne has told me that the King was exceedingly pleased to hear, through the two last letters which your Serene Highness

did me the honour to write, that M. le Duc de Zell is well disposed towards the alliance ; and I believe I am right when I tell you that if we could arrange a treaty which is at the same time useful to His Serene Highness and agreeable to His Majesty, it would last a long while, for the King has great confidence in M. le Duc de Zell, and is much attached to him.

M. de Pomponne's reply was pretty nearly what I expected it would be, when I had the honour to write to your Serene Highness on the 18th inst. That is to say, that His Majesty cannot enter into any settlement for the arrangement of a part of the country of Bremen, but he would willingly give the Duke de Zell a sum of money to compensate him, and also to satisfy his allies. This, Madame, is what I am ordered to tell you. And after having informed you what M. de Pomponne has told me, I ask the liberty to be allowed to give you my own opinions on the present state of affairs. I trust your Serene Highness will understand that I do so to prove my zeal in your favour, and with the wish of seeing the Duke's and His Majesty's interests amicably united.

I will begin with telling your Serene High-

ness that if the Duke de Zell is resolved not to come to any settlement, without keeping part of his conquests, my idea is that he ought to send some one immediately to Nimègue to make overtures to the Swedish Ambassadors, as they are apparently siding with His Majesty's plenipotentiaries, and by this means His Highness will ascertain whether he has any reason to hope for peace on these conditions, and I shall not have to reproach myself in the future for not having shown him the only way which was open to him. If Monseigneur le Duc is fully determined not to come to any agreement without retaining these provinces, I believe in the present state of affairs Sweden will be alone in her war against the King of Denmark, the Duke de Zell and the Elector of Brandebourg, and all their allies are pledged not to interfere. Every one is hoping that the matter will be settled by the offers of peace which the King, has made ; and as His Majesty is ready with all his forces, he desires nothing more to complete his triumph than the re-establishment of Sweden, which is the first condition of the treaty he has made. I do not pretend to discuss the means which His Majesty possesses to forcibly re-establish what they have

lost during that war ; each one can make his own deductions as he pleases, and I do not know whether the Elector de Brandebourg would go to extreme measures, or if he would think fit to enter into a negotiation of his own free will to come to an agreement. This is what I fear, with respect to the Duke de Zell's interest.

I believe, Madame, that the King of Denmark perfectly understands that His Majesty could easily send forty vessels loaded with sufficient troops to enable him to restore peacefully all which has been taken from Sweden.

I could well add also that, in the present state of affairs in England, it would not be an impossibility for the King to get His British Majesty to assist him in forcing Denmark to restore what she has taken from Sweden ; if His Majesty would prefer doing this to sending his vessels.

I believe also that the King of England and the Duke of York are convinced that they would not be in their present position in their own country, had they continued the alliance which they had entered into with His Majesty.

You will see by all this, Madame, that notwithstanding the present aspect of affairs, it will

terminate in an individual agreement, which will considerably alter the position of others, and if I prophesy correctly, I am right in persuading M. le Duc de Zell to make the first move. I feel I am tiring you with my arguments and the length of my letter, but I must add that His Serene Highness has three alternatives to choose from. The first, to remain as he is; the second, to make a secret treaty with the King, and for a certain sum of money, consent to restore the territory of Bremen and remain neutral; the third, to find out whether he can retain a part of his conquests, which he can only do by an agreement with Sweden, consequently, giving the latter the advantage, it being the wish of Sweden that His Serene Highness should join with his relatives in a war against the Elector of Brandenburg, and retake Pomerania. But when I think of the difficulty there will be in persuading Sweden to lose another part of her dominions in the hope of being entirely re-established, besides the further difficulty of negotiating with her on account of the sea passage, and their natural slowness in conducting their affairs, all these things taken into consideration convince me His Highness should accept a sum of money and

make a direct agreement with His Majesty to maintain the treaty of Westphalia, and arrange with the King to receive from him money and troops to force the Elector of Brandebourg to restore what he has taken from Sweden ; supposing that Monseigneur, le Duc de Zell, has cause to complain of the Elector de Brandebourg, as I have heard he has from public rumour. I think, also, that His Serene Highness ought to stipulate for some modification of the Elector of Brandebourg's power, if, contrary to our expectation, the Elector remains master of Pomerania, as I am persuaded that M. le Duc de Zell cannot place any confidence in M. l'Electeur's word, nor in his treaties, and I recollect when M. le Duc de Zell thought as I do now. I hope His Serene Highness will do me the justice to believe that in writing all my thoughts I have no wish to cause him more uneasiness in the future than he ought otherwise to expect. But I wish to impress upon him that His Majesty is more anxious to obtain a friendly alliance with him than with anyone else, and I know your sentiments, Madame, too well to doubt the pleasure it will accord your Serene Highness if M. le Duc de Zell and His Majesty

seal their friendship with this alliance. There is one more thing I wish to say to your Serene Highness—that if by chance the Duke de Zell should hear that the King of Denmark and the Elector of Brandebourg were entering into an individual treaty, His Serene Highness can prevent it by sending a representative here, with instructions and full authority, and I will give him the same assistance as if it concerned my own fortune, that is of course supposing that he judges it advisable in his own interests to make one of the two treaties which I have already proposed, and which depend absolutely on His Majesty, namely, to take a certain sum of money and remain neutral, or to take considerably more to oblige the Elector of Brandebourg to restore to the Swedes what he has taken from them, and to maintain the ancient treaty of Westphalia, because, I ought to tell you, that if His Serene Highness will not give up a part of the provinces which he has conquered, this proposition must necessarily come from the Swedes or His Majesty.

I have already taken the liberty of informing you that His Serene Highness, having acquired so much prestige in the late war, it seems to me

he ought to make a peace that will enable him to select a son-in-law in Europe, by the many advantages which he can urge in favour of your daughter, the Princess Sophie-Dorothée, and as I know he has her interest at heart, I am sure he will agree with me that a sum of money will be of more assistance to a dowry than a portion of the territory of Brème. I entreat your Serene Highness to do me the justice to believe that no one takes a more respectful interest in her own and the Duke de Zell's welfare than myself.

Since writing my letter, I have heard, with the greatest pleasure, from Monsieur de Pomponne, that the Duchesse de Mecklenbourg has informed him that the Duke de Zell is so dissatisfied with the Elector of Brandebourg, that he feels disposed to make a treaty reserving a part of the country of Bremen, and to make him restore Pomerania to Sweden. In this case, Madame, it only rests for us to pay a certain sum to His Serene Highness to compensate him for the portion of the country of Bremen, in case the Swedes, will not let him retain that portion, and Monsieur de Pomponne assures me that His Majesty will willingly make a treaty for the sub-

sides which he required during this war ; thus the affair will soon be settled, and His Serene Highness will retain the country of Bremen until Sweden cedes to him the portion agreed on, or until the Duke receives the sum of money which His Majesty promises as compensation.

(Copy—Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.)

XIX

LOUIS XIV to the DUCHESS ELÉONORE DE
BRUNSWICK ZELL.

SAINT CLOUD, April 31, 1682.

MY COUSIN,—I have received with much pleasure your kind assurances of interest in all that concerns me, and I trust you do not doubt that I am always happy to testify the esteem and affectionate regard which I have for you. I pray God to preserve you in his sacred keeping.

MADAME LA DUCHESSE DE ZELL.

(Copy—Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Correspondence of Brunswick.)

XX

FREDERIC PRINCE ELECTORAL OF BRANDEBOURG to
the DUCHESS ELÉONORE DE BRUNSWICK ZELL.

MADAME,—I have ordered Baron de Heiden,
the Colonel Commandant at Wesel, to testify to
the Duke de Zell my humble gratitude for the
reception and treatment which I received at Zell.
Owing to the agreement between us I ought not
to write myself. I must also thank you Madame
for your kindness, and beg to assure your High-
ness that my wife unites with me in again
assuring you of our esteem and regard.—From
your Highness' humble and very obedient
servant,
FREDERICK.

BERLIN, January 11, 1685.

(Archives of the Royal Private Affairs of the
Prussian States at Berlin. Copy—Sammlung
von Briefen fürstlichen Personen Königs
Friedrick I Briefwechsel, t. I, fol. 81.)

XXI

The DUCHESS ELÉONORE DE BRUNSWICK ZELL to
the PRINCE ELECTORAL OF BRANDEBOURG.

ZELL, February 10, 1686.

I hope, Monsieur, that Your Highness will

excuse my writing in this unceremonious manner, and that you will believe me when I tell you how grieved I was to hear of your son's death. I pray God to console your Highness, and that the new year will give you another son, and that everything will arrange itself to your satisfaction. I should be happy if I could make your Highness understand the depth of my sympathy. —Your very humble servant,

ELÉONORE.

Monsieur le Duc commissions me to send his compliments to your Highness, and to assure you he is much affected by your son's death.

To His Highness the Prince
Electoral de Brandebourg, at Berlin.

(Original, *ibidem*, folio 81^{a.b.})

XXII

THE PRINCE ELECTORAL DE BRANDEBOURG to the
DUCHESS ELÉONORE DE BRUNSWICK ZELL.

(Not dated), February, 1686.

I am persuaded, Madame, that you sympathize with me in my affliction, and am much obliged for your wishes respecting the replace-

ment of my loss, which I am patiently waiting for.

I fear bad consequences from this Hamburg affair, a result I did not expect after the Duke's assurances. He will get no help from me if all is not settled soon. Aid this by all the means in your power, and believe me it is the best service your Highness can render to the public and to your humble servant,

FREDERIC.

I entreat your Highness to thank Monsieur le Duc for his kind message of condolence.

(Copy, *ibidem*, 81^c)

XXIII

The DUCHESS ELÉONORE DE BRUNSWICK ZELL to
the PRINCE ELECTORAL DE BRANDEBOURG.

ZELL, February 26, 1686.

I should be sorry if your Highness believed that M. le Duc had broken his word. He is above it. He will do nothing against the town, and will be friendly towards it as he has ever been, as soon as some satisfaction is given for the insult he has received. He says that your Highness is too just to condemn him, and you

will endeavour to procure him this satisfaction. For myself, Sire, I wish the affair was settled to everyone's satisfaction, thus proving to your Highness that I am his humble servant,

ELÉONORE.

To His Highness
The Prince Electoral of Brandenburg,
at Berlin.

(Original, *ibidem*, 81^d)

XXIV

THE PRINCE ELECTORAL DE BRANDEBOURG to the
DUCHESS ELÉONORE DE BRUNSWICK ZELL.

I assure you, Madame, I am as favourably disposed towards M. le Duc at the present moment as I ever was before this Hamburg affair took place, and if I wished it undone it was on account of the annoyance it caused. I will willingly contribute all in my power to end the unpleasantness, and I beg you to assure M. le Duc that he can rely on my humble services.

Madame, your obedient servant,

FREDERIC.

An die Hertzogin von Zell
De B[erlin], March 16, 1686.

(Copy, *ibidem*, 81^f)

XXV

GOURVILLE to M. DE BOUCŒUR.

PARIS, June 28, 1686.

During the time that the work of the Chamber was interrupted, I did myself the honour of writing to Madame la Duchess de Zell, that if Their Serene Highnesses thought it proper to send some one here to investigate your affair,* I considered the enquiry could take place, and that I would write to them again on this point. I did not think I could say otherwise. I will do my best on your behalf, and I trust you believe I am sincerely yours,

GOURVILLE.

(Original—Archives of the Royal Private Affairs at Hanover. Calenberger original archiv. Des. 22 vi, 41.)

XXVI

LEIBNITZ to BERNSTORFF, the DUKE DE ZELL'S
Prime Minister.

HANOVER, January, 3, 1693.

MONSIEUR,—I ought not to trouble your Excellency on the opening of the New Year, as I

* No doubt to procure Boucœur's liberty. See page 93 and following.

feel convinced it is unnecessary for me to assure you of my good wishes for your prosperity. You know me too well to doubt me, and I earnestly pray that God will grant you a long life.

This is what I want to write to you about. I remember having spoken of the genealogical researches of M. de Greiffencranz, who excels in that study, particularly respecting illustrious French families, and as the House of Brunswick seems interested in the enclosed paper, I thought your Excellency might like to see a specimen of the proofs.

This is what M. de Greiffencranz has sent me, and it shews that Madame la Duchesse de Zell is descended on the female side, and by several inter-marriages, from sovereigns and kings. It is certain that the illustrious houses of Vermandois, Anjou, and Angoulême were united by marriage to still more celebrated families ; for example, Alix de Courtenay, wife of Aymar Count d'Angoulême, one of the ancestors named in the proof, was grand-daughter of a King of France. They began these genealogical researches in France before Germany entered upon them. Several families can prove their right to noble descent, and as some of these discoveries have

been published, they have assisted M. de Greiffencranz in his work. Although I do not think Madame la Duchesse will take much interest in these things which she will consider as vanities, still as vanities are intermixed with realities in worldly affairs, they are useful as food for reflection. No doubt, your Excellency will so find them on this occasion. I have been pleased to prove my zeal in this affair, Monsieur, from your excellence, etc.,

LEIBNITZ.

To M. de Bernstorff, Prime Minister
to His Serene Highness at Zell.

(Copy in Leibnitz' hand writing Royal Library
at Hanover, Manuscript XXIII, No. 325.)

XXVII

THE DUKE ANTOINE-ULRIC OF BRUNSWICK WOLFEN-
BUTTEL to the DUCHESS ELÉONORE DE BRUNSWICK ZELL.

(Last days of July or the first of August, 1694)

MADAME,—if you are, as I believe, still convinced that notwithstanding the revolutions of the times, I have always retained for you and all connected with you a sincere and disinterested friendship, you will easily understand my feelings

in your present affliction. When one is warmly attached to a person one can sympathize with her misfortune as if it were one's own, you can judge, Madame, that I am much affected by yours. It is true that I do not know the rights of the case. I have heard uncertain rumours; and if one can judge by the trial which has been held on the unfortunate princess, it makes one almost believe that her crime is of the nature that has been published and which it would be too painful for me to name. I cannot realise that any base design could enter into the heart of a young girl so well born, and brought up with such care, and one whom I know possesses an extremely good disposition, therefore, Madame, I feel disposed to believe that things are not so terrible as they make out—they must be rather faults than crimes. I wish, Madame, that the relationship of our house was on a sufficiently good footing to enable me to give you all the assistance in my power in your misfortune, for at present I regret to say I can do nothing but pity the troubles of your family, and sympathise with yours in particular. Notwithstanding, Madame, if you think that, in the present state of affairs, I can, without giving any offence and

without compromising you, be of any use in alleviating your trouble, you have only to command me. You know the sincerity of my motives, and that I am entirely at your service.

Yours, Madame, etc.

(Copy, in the hand-writing of Councillor Hertel, preserved in the Archives of the Ducal Affairs at Wolfenbüttel.)

This letter was written by Duke Antoine-Ulric himself, to the Duchess de Zell.

XXVIII

THE DUCHESS ELÉONORE DE BRUNSWICK ZELL, to
the DUKE ANTOINE-ULRIC DE WOLFENBÜTTEL.

ZELL, August 9, 1694.

MONSIEUR,—I am infinitely obliged for the honour you have done me in sympathising with my sorrow, and for all the kind things which you have had the goodness to say to me about my daughter. I hope that in time, and with God's grace, she will surmount the difficulties with which she is surrounded, and I earnestly pray that it will please Him to unite in love all the members of this house. I hope, Monsieur, you

believe me when I say that I owe you a life-long gratitude. From your humble and obedient servant,

ELÉONORE.

(Original—Archives of the Ducal Affairs of Wolfenbüttel.)

XXIX

THE DUKE ANTOINE-ULRIC DE WOLFENBÜTTEL to
the DUCHESS ELÉONORE DE BRUNSWICK ZELL.

(January or the first days of February 1695.)

You are, I feel sure, well aware of the affection and friendship which I have for you. Therefore I trust you will not disapprove if I assure you from time to time of its continuance. Your dignified submission was such a notable feature in this sad family affair, that I was forcibly reminded of our tie of friendship. I must own that the circumstance which came to light at the time of your daughter's retreat, and the persons who were engaged in the affair, as well as the cold reply to my last letter, kept me in terrible suspense, and made me believe that your daughter must be very guilty, when she was abandoned by her nearest relatives, who, by their manner of proceeding, prevented other friends

from taking her part. But now, Madame, I understand that in the last trial, your daughter was pronounced guilty, on quite another charge. I think she has been very ill advised to have given occasion for so much dissatisfaction to all concerned, and she ought not to have been permitted to have allowed things to arrive at their present juncture. Nevertheless, in the position which she is placed, as she is released from her matrimonial ties, it seems to me that my old rights are re-established, and I look on her now as being on the same footing as I should do, if her engagement with my late son had been accomplished and then broken by his death. Now you can understand that I regard her in the light of my daughter-in-law, and with the Duke's permission I will do all in my power to assist you in this affair, entreating you at the same time to assure my brother the Duke that notwithstanding the opposition which in the common interest of other princes I have been obliged to make against the pretensions of Hanover, I have always preserved a disinterested affection and sincere attachment in the interest of his house, and I am prepared to sacrifice all my own grievances in this instance, and if any ill-meaning person

attempt to prevent this reconciliation by malicious insinuations, time will shew that they do me injustice. I implore you, Madame, to use all your influence and power to remove this imputation against me, and procure me an opportunity of convincing you of my sincerity by deeds and not words. . . .

On the same sheet followed :—

If I do not send you as many proofs of affectionate regard, as in your present affliction you have a right to expect, you must attribute the cause to the vexatious contretemps which stops the way of a regular correspondence. I shall take advantage of the occasions which present themselves, from time to time, to assure you that I shall never cease to take an interest in all that happens to you and yours. In the meanwhile, I own that the circumstances which were associated with the Princess's misfortune, and those who were engaged in the affair, kept me in terrible suspense, and made me believe that a person must be very guilty when her nearest relatives entirely abandoned her.

But now, Madame, I understand that the Princess was tried on quite another charge, and I find she has been badly advised to have given any

room for the present subject of dissatisfaction, and to have let things get into their present state.

(Copy, in the hand-writing of Councillor Hertel, preserved in the Archives of the Ducal Affairs at Wolfenbüttel. The letter to the Duchess de Zell was written by Duke Antoine-Ulric.)

XXX

THE DUCHESS ELÉONORE DE BRUNSWICK ZELL to
the DUKE ANTOINE-ULRIC DE WOLFENBÜTTEL.

ZELL, February 10, 1695.

MONSIEUR,—I am more affected than I can express by your Highness's kind sympathy on the unpleasant subject which has arisen in my family. It is a consolation to know that some one takes my part; I entreat you to believe that I appreciate all the kind things you say of my daughter. I pray unceasingly that this family may one day be re-united. Heaven grant it may. I should be happy if I could adequately convince you of my gratitude. Your very humble and very obedient servant, ELEONORE.

(Original—Archives of the Ducal affairs of Wolfenbüttel.)

XXXI

The DUCHESS ELÉONORE DE BRUNSWICK ZELL
to LOUIS XIV

SIRE,—I have gratefully and respectfully received the letter which your Majesty honoured me by sending through M. du Héron, Colonel of Dragoons. I am sensibly affected by this mark of your kindness, and also by the obliging things which you commissioned him to say. I wish for nothing more than an opportunity to prove my merit for so many favours, and also my deep respect for your Majesty. (In the Duchess's hand writing.) I am your very humble and obedient servant,

ELÉONORE,

Duchess de Brunswick and Lunebourg.

September, 1698.

(Original—Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Correspondence of Brunswick.)

XXXII

LEIBNITZ to the DUCHESS ELÉONORE DE BRUNSWICK
ZELL.

HANOVER, January 3, 1699.

It is the first time that I have taken the

liberty and availed myself of the universal custom at the beginning of the New Year to send your Highness my good wishes. My heart more than the custom prompts them, and I pray God to grant to your Serene Highness, and also to Monseigneur the Duke, perfect health and all sorts of prosperity in this and in other years. I will not be so bold as to write to the Duke also, but I hope your Serene Highness, with your usual kindness, will assure him of the sincerity of my wishes on this occasion, and you will also pardon the liberty I am taking in writing to speak of a subject in which I take a respectful interest. If, Madame, the overtures which your Serene Highness made to the King of England, to declare himself in favour of Zell, are followed, we shall not have any cause to envy the Prince Electoral of Bavaria, who, report says, is the acknowledged successor to the King of Spain. Because one or other of your Serene Highness's grandchildren will wear the crown of England, it seems to me that the possibility of this glorious event ought to accord your Serene Highness great satisfaction. But I hope they will conclude this negotiation, which has an excellent foundation, since the King said

positively to Madame the Electress that he would establish the right of succession for her posterity. I think also that he was extremely pleased with the Prince Electoral and the Princess, and he explained himself as they wished respecting the negotiation of a marriage between the Princess and the Duke of Gloucester; and although this Prince is still very young I do not doubt that they will take good care to take advantage of the King's word and his present disposition and strike while the iron is hot, and at least get one or other of the points settled. I heartily wish that God will crown these good efforts of your Serene Highness with success, and I am, Madame, your devoted, etc.

(Copy preserved in the Archives of the Royal Affairs of Hanover.)

XXXIII

THE DUCHESS ELÉONORE DE BRUNSWICK ZELL
to LEIBNITZ.

ZELL, January 10, 1699.

I thank you, Monsieur, for your good wishes to Monsieur the Duke, and myself on the subject

of the New Year, and I am happy to think that they proceed from the heart, and not from the usual custom. I shall not miss an opportunity of assuring the Duke of your zeal for himself and his family. I wish I could render you a service to prove that I am your friend who esteems you greatly,

ELÉONORE,
Duchess de Brunswick Lunebourg.

P.S. I do not answer the last article of your letter, but will do so when I see you.

(Leibnitz added the following lines.)

This was respecting the projected marriage between the Duke of Gloucester and the Princess of Hanover, of which I suggested the possibility to the Duchess de Zell, and she mentioned it to the King when he was at Zell in 1698. The King expressed his approval of it, and said that he would establish the right of succession for the posterity of Madame, the Electress, in fact, he promised the Electress positively that he would assure the succession, and he made considerable effort in this direction, after his conversation with the Duchess de Zell.

(Original—Archives of the Royal Affairs of Hanover.)

XXXIV

The DUCHESS ELÉONORE DE BRUNSWICK ZELL to
M. DE BOUCŒUR, Privy Councillor to the
DUKE DE ZELL.

BRUCHHAUSEN, May 29, 1699.

I was surprised and very sorry to hear of M. de Gagemont's regrettable state. I wish I could assist him, but I scarcely know in what manner to do so. I beg you, Monsieur, to consult with M. de Monroy, and tell me what you think I ought to do on his behalf. Respecting my own affairs, he can let his son take the management of them since he wishes to do so, and please thank Legendre (*) for the offers he makes me. I am much obliged for your kind wishes. I trust you will believe that I am very grateful, and that I am always yours sincerely, ELÉONORE.

(Original—Archives of Hanoverian Affairs.)

XXXV

The DUCHESS DE BRUNSWICK ZELL to M. DE
BOUCŒUR.

BRUCHHAUSEN, June 8, 1699.

I feel I owe you my apologies, Monsieur, for

* A business man who was occupied in the Duchess de Zell's interest in France.

having opened your letter to the Abbé de Saint Hermine. I should not have taken the liberty of doing so, had it not concerned my affairs, and on this account I hope you will excuse it; and that you believe I am always your friend,

ELÉONORE.

(Original, *ibidem*.)

XXXVI

The DUCHESS ELÉONORE DE BRUNSWICK ZELL to
the ARCHIPRESBYTER DE DEY, in Saintonge.

(Not dated) about 1700.

I am much obliged to you, Monsieur l'Archiprestre, for the deference you have paid me in again explaining your claims as I desired. I had answered your former letter in a manner that would have satisfied you had you received it. I mention this to shew you that I was not wanting in civility to a man of your calling. Now that I have been made acquainted with the cause of our difference, I see clearly that I could urge as a plea in my favour, that the property of Olbreuze is not as valuable now as it was in the time of my ancestors and yours. But I attach more importance to our friendship than to this

minor interest: for that reason, and to end the difference, I order to be paid to you five hundred livres a year, from the time that you were put in possession of the Curé de Dhays, without mentioning the tithes which you have levied. I shall continue this said payment for my lifetime, but I will not pledge myself to anything that will be detrimental to my successors' interests. I trust, Monsieur l'Archiprestre, that this satisfies you, and that, for the future, our relationship will continue amicably, for my part I beg to assure you that I reciprocate your civility.

(Copy, in the Duchess's hand-writing, Archives of the Hanoverian Affairs. Cal. Or. Archiv. Des. 22, vi, 33.)

XXXVII

THE DUCHESS ELÉONORE DE BRUNSWICK ZELL to
M. DE WACKERBART, Governor of the Castle
of Ahlden.

(Not dated,) March, 1700.

I shall feel obliged, Monsieur, if you will kindly deliver enclosed packet to my daughter.

With compliments to Madame de Wackerbart
and yourself,

ELÉONORE.

(Original—Archives of Hanover. Des XV,
No. 92, 1694-1702.)

XXXVIII

The DUCHESS ELÉONORE DE BRUNSWICK ZELL to
M. DE BOUCŒUR, Privy Councillor of the
Duke de Zell.

WIENHAUSEN, Thursday, March, 1700.

[A letter from M d'Exoudun, dated from Magdelaine near Rochelle, March 5th, 1700, had been sent to M. de Boucœur. It contained an offer of purchase for a portion of the Olbreuze property, so the latter forwarded it to the Duchess. She replied as follows :]

I hoped to have seen you yesterday at Zell, and to have answered your letter verbally, but as that was impossible, I gave Ernest your letter from M. d'Exoudun to return to you, and I commissioned him to tell you, Monsieur, that I do not wish to part with the Olbreuze property. I thank M. d'Exoudun for his advice, and I beg you to present my compliments to him. I will

communicate with M. de Gagemont on the subject.—I am, yours very truly,

ELÉONORE.

(Original—Archives of Hanover. Cal. or Arch. Des. 22, VI, 23.)

XXXIX

LOUIS XIV to the DUCHESS ELÉONORE DE
BRUNSWICK.

(This letter was delivered to the Duchess by the Marquis de Bonac, French envoy.)

MARLY, May 7, 1700.

MY COUSIN,—I always take advantage with pleasure of the occasions which present themselves to enable me to assure you of the sentiments of affection which I entertain for you. My special messenger, the Marquis de Bonac, will assure you of my regard, and as I do not doubt your acceptance of all that he says on this subject, it only remains for me to pray God, etc.

(Copy—Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Correspondence of Brunswick.

R

XL

The Duchess replied to the above on May 26, 1700, the tenor of her answer being the same as the letter which she had sent to M. Du Heron in the month of September, 1698.

(Original — Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Ibidem.)

XLI

The DUCHESS ELÉONORE DE BRUNSWICK ZELL to M.
DE BOUCŒUR, Privy Councillor of the Duke de
Zell.

ZELL, May 29, 1700.

I send you the letters* which I have received from the tenantry of Olbreuze. I should feel obliged if you will reply to them saying that I have given M. de Gagemont liberty to allot the ground as he thinks fit.—Believe me always your sincere friend,

ELÉONORE.

(Original—Archives of Hanover.)

* Letter in which they wanted to change the tenants on the Olbreuze estate.

XLII

LOUIS XIV to the DUCHESS ELÉONORE DE BRUNSWICK ZELL.—(Letter delivered by the Marquis d'Usson French envoy.)

FONTAINBLEAU, September 29, 1701.

MY COUSIN,—I order the Lieutenant General, the Marquis d'Usson and my special messenger, to assure you of the great affection that I have for you. I do not doubt but what you will fully believe all that he says to you on my behalf, and be persuaded that it is with great pleasure I accord you this mark of my esteem.

I pray God guard you, my cousin, in his sacred care.

(Copy preserved in the Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Correspondence of Brunswick.)

XLIII

THE DUCHESS ELÉONORE DE BRUNSWICK ZELL to
the COUNCILLOR DE BOUCŒUR.

GIFHORN, August 29, 1702.

I have quite decided not to sell my property of Olbreuze ; I beg, Monsieur, that you will

present my compliments to M. d'Isoudain, and inform him of my decision.* I also wish you would request those who write to you on the subject to address their letters to me. We hope, please God, to be at Zell on Thursday.—I am always yours faithfully, ELÉONORE.

(Original—Archives of Hanover, Cal. or Arch. Des. 22, VI, 23.)

XLIV

THE DUCHESS DE BRUNSWICK ZELL TO FREDERICK
I, KING OF PRUSSIA.

Hochgeehrter Freundlicher Lieber Herr
Vetter!

Nachdem es Ew Koenigl. Mayest. gefallig
gewesen an Uns dero Cammerer den graffen von
Wartensleben abzuschicken, umb durch denselben
Ew. Koenig. Mayest. Condolenz über den unver-
hofften doch sanfft und seeligen Todt Unseres
Hochgeehrtesten und Hochgeliebsten Herrn
Gemahls Gnaden den Durchleuchtigsten Fürsten
und Herrn Georg Wilhelm Hertzog zu Brauns-

* Referring to a letter from M. du Fay d'Exoudun of August 8th, 1702, addressed to M. de Bouccœur, and making an offer of purchase for the Olbreuze property.

chweig und Lüneburg, etc. Glorwürdigsten Audenckens uns bezeugen zu lassen ; so erstatten Wir zupforderst für die Ehre dieser Abschickung und dadurch bezeigten Mitleiden, ganz dienstlichen Danck, mit dem hertzlichsten Wunsch, es wolle der grosse Gott Ew. Koenig. Mayest. und dero Koenigl. Hauss für allen Trauerfællen lange Jahre bewahren, und in allem Flor und Wohlergehen gnädiglich erhalten. Dero Wir zu allen angenehmen freundl. Muhmlichen Diensterweisungen jeder zeit willigst und geffissen verbleiben. Datum Zelle, deu 23ten September, 1705.

VON GOTTES GNADEN ELÉONORE.

Verwittbte Hertzogin zu Brauchweig und Luneburg.

(In the Duchess' handwriting.)

Ew. Koenig. Maye. Dienstwilligste Trewe
Muhm und Dienerin. ELÉONORE.

Dem Durchleuctigsten Grossmächtigsten
Fürsten Herrn Friedrich Koenige von Preussen
Marggraffen zu Brandenburg, etc.

(Archives of the Royal Secret Affairs of the
Prussian States at Berlin. Correspondenz mit
Kur—Braunschweig und Zell, 1693-1711. Pièce
originiale.)

XLV

THE DUCHESS ELÉONORE DE BRUNSWICK ZELL TO
KING FREDERICK I OF PRUSSIA.

SIRE,—In the affliction which it has pleased God to send me, my greatest consolation has been the kind sympathy with which your Majesty has honoured me, and for which I tender my grateful thanks. Nothing can alleviate my suffering, but I trust your Majesty will always honour me with your esteem.—From your humble and very obedient servant,

ELÉONORE,

Duchess de Brunswick Luneburg Zell.

September 23, 1705.

(Original—Archives of the Ministry of Secret Affairs at Berlin. Manuscript. Sammlung von Briefen fürstl. Personen. Königs Friederich I Briefwechsel, t. 1, fol. 81.)

XLVI

THE DUCHESS ELÉONORE DE BRUNSWICK ZELL TO
KING FREDERICK I OF PRUSSIA.

Not dated (summer of 1706.)

SIRE,—I was rejoiced to hear from your Majesty that a marriage is to take place between the Prince Royal and the Princess of Hanover.

Nothing in the world, Sire, can give me greater satisfaction than this alliance. I own to your Majesty I have always wished for it. Heaven grant that the union is blessed with happiness and prosperity, and I heartily pray to God to shower his most precious favours on all your family. I entreat you to honour me with your esteem and to believe that I am extremely grateful for all your kindness. — From your Majesty's very humble and very obedient servant,

ELÉONORE,

Duchess de Brunswick Luneburg.

(Original—Archives of the Royal Secret Affairs of the Prussian States. Manuscript. Sammlung von Briefen fürstl. Personen. Königs Friedrich I Briefwechsel, t. 1, fol. 79-80.)

XLVII

FROM FIVE YOUNG LADIES OF THE SOCIETY OF YOUNG
FRENCH LADIES, REFUGEES OF HARLEM, to the
.DUCHESS ELÉONORE DE BRUNSWICK ZELL.

MADAME,—We have been rejoiced to hear of the improvement in your Majesty's health, and we have thanked God for the same. As the preservation of your Serene Highness is a

blessing from Heaven for so many persons, and the christian charity which you have conferred on our society (*) is on the present occasion another reason why we should join in the general thanksgiving, and ask the Lord for long life, good health and prosperity for your Serene Highness. After this, Madame, may we be permitted to express our deep gratitude for the continuation of your charity to our house. We fully appreciate the greatness of your gift, and the blessing which it entails, in improving our circumstances.

In conclusion, Madame, we beg to assure your Serene Highness of our very humble thanks for the many benefits which we have received, and we ask permission to sign ourselves,

Your Serene Highness's very humble and very obedient servants,

DOLLAN GOUPILLIÈRE.

SOUSIGNAC.

THEHILLAC.

DE LA FALAISE.

MAULLEVRIER.

HARLEM, September 6, 1706.

(Original—Archives of Hanover. Cal. or Arch. Des. 22, VI, No 41.)

* The Duchess had granted an annual subsidy of 1000 florins to this society at Harlem.

XLVIII

The DUCHESS ELÉONORE DE BRUNSWICK ZELL
to KING FREDERICK I OF PRUSSIA.

SIRE,—I humbly beg to assure your Majesty of my appreciation of your Majesty's kindness in informing me of the marriage of the Prince Royal. I owe you a life-long gratitude. I earnestly pray that your Majesty will approve of the Princess Royal. I pray to heaven, sire, to preserve the prosperity of all your family in the coming year. May God bestow on you his most precious favours, and I assure you, sire, that no one esteems and respects your Majesty more than your very humble and obedient servant

ELÉONORE, DUCHESS DE BRUNSWICK.

LUNEBOURG, December 29, 1706

(Original—Archives of the Royal House of Prussia at Berlin.)

XLIX

M. DE GAGEMONT to the COUNCILLOR DE BOUCŒUR.

I understand, Monsieur, by the letters from Rochelle, that M. the Intendant de Rochefort has

announced that the King has restored the property of Olbreuze to Her Serene Highness the Duchess de Zell, and that he has ordered that those who have received the revenues should return them through the hands of the tenantry. I thought it my duty to apprise you of this event, as I am interested in Her Serene Highness's affairs, and I take the liberty to ask her orders, assuring her that no one will execute them with more zeal and exactitude than myself. I am, Monsieur, your very humble and obedient servant,

GAGEMONT.

GAGEMONT, April 7, 1707.

(Original—Archives of the Royal Affairs of Hanover.)

L

THE DUCHESS ELÉONORE DE BRUNSWICK ZELL
to FREDERICK I, KING of PRUSSIA.

SIRE,—Last week was one of the happiest of my life, since I received two proofs of your Majesty's kindness and remembrance, and they were welcomed, Sire, with all the respect and gratitude which they merited. I humbly thank your Majesty for honouring me with your

favour, and I beg to congratulate you on the condition of the Princess Royal ; I hope, Sire, that it will please God to make you soon a grandfather. Trusting that all things will arrange themselves entirely to your satisfaction, and with deep submission to your Majesty,—I am, your humble and obedient servant,

ELÉONORE, DUCHESS DE BRUNSWICK.

LUNEBOURG, May 20, 1707.

(Original—Archives of the Royal Secret Affairs of the Prussian States at Berlin. Manuscript Sammlung von Briefen fürstlichen Personen. Königs Friedrich I Briefwechsel, III fol. 147, 148.)

LI

The DUCHESS ELÉONORE DE BRUNSWICK ZELL to
KING FREDERICK I OF PRUSSIA.

SIRE,—Your Majesty has accorded me great satisfaction by honouring me with a letter informing me of your grandson's birth. No one can be more pleased by the event than myself. I warmly congratulate your Majesty on this addition to your royal family. I pray God unceasingly to bless and protect your Majesty. I

take the liberty of asking for a continuance of your honoured good will.

I am, Sire, with infinite respect and sincere attachment,—Your Majesty's very humble servant

ELÉONORE DUCHESS DE BRUNSWICK.

LUNEBOURG, November 30, 1707

(Original, *ibidem*, fol. 91 and 92.)

LII

THE PRINCESS SOPHIE-DOROTHÉE DE BRUNSWICK

LUNEBOURG to M. R.*

November 30th, 1707.

I could not reply to your letter of a few days ago, Monsieur, because I was late in concluding the one I was writing to my mother.† I think with you that it will be difficult to settle my affairs in Hanover (in so far as they relate to what was left to me in my late father's will,) during the absence of M. de Gœrtz (the President.) Thus, it will be wiser to await his

* Doubtless the Councillor Ramdohr, whose name appears several times in connection with the Princess's affairs.

† We have not found in existence, in the Archives of Zell or Hanover, a single letter from Sophie-Dorothée to her mother during her captivity. Evidently the letters were destroyed by the King's orders after the Princess's death.

return, and a more convenient time, when I hope they will be settled. I shall be glad also, before you take any further steps, to know your opinion on the subject, also what you advise me to do ; at the same time will you explain the circumstances of the case ? I own I am rejoiced at the flattering hopes which you give me ; I am very grateful for all you have done to further my wishes. I send you, Monsieur, the receipt for eleven hundred crowns, which you forwarded me last Sunday ; your son has also sent me five hundred and fifty crowns, for which I signed the receipt. Also, I have to thank you for your congratulations respecting my daughter's safe confinement. I am more grateful than I can express, to think that God has sent her a son ; to judge from appearances her happiness is complete—may Heaven preserve its continuance. The Divine Providence which watches over my children will do what is best for their mother also ; I confide my future to His sacred keeping. You are doubtless aware that Lieutenant General Finch has left Hanover, and he is at present with my mother. I must conclude, Monsieur, and allow me to assure you that I should be glad of an opportunity to render you a service.

S. D.

Copy of the reply to R. of his letter November 26th, 1707.

(In the Princess's handwriting. Archives of the Secret Affairs of the Prussian States at Berlin. R XI; 140 G. Zu den ahlenschen Erbschaftsakten gehörig. Paket I.)

LIII

The DUCHESS ELÉONORE DE BRUNSWICK ZELL to
COUPPET, her agent at Olbreuze.

MONSIEUR COUPPET,—I see by the accounts which Monseigneur l'Archiprêtre de Dey has sent me of the state in which he tells me you have left the Château d'Olbreuze and other places that I have cause to complain of you for letting the building suffer for want of repair; I also see by his account that you are responsible to me for seven hundred livres more than you have sent me, this makes a total of two thousand two hundred livres which you owe me, after deducting the sum due from you to me. The money which was due to you from the inhabitants of my property of Olbreuze, I will willingly forego to console those poor people and

convince them of my affection. By the account which you send me, you make out that the balance in my favour is only fifteen hundred livres. Although your proceedings ought to be rigorously dealt with, I will look over them and content myself with the fifteen hundred livres which you acknowledge you owe me, thus cancelling the surplus marked in the accounts sent me by Monseigneur l'Archiprêtre, but I beg you to repay him the money he advanced to repair my property; you are also to give forty crowns to M. Legendre, and let me know then the balance which you have remaining of the sum of fifteen hundred livres so that I may dispose of it as I think fit. Will you send me the bonds which you have had from the inhabitants of Olbreuze, and let them know that they are acquitted from their payments to you. These are my orders

M. COUPPET.

LUNEBOURG, January 24, 1709.

(Copy in an unknown handwriting.—Archives of the Royal Affairs of Hanover. Cal. Or. Arch. Des. 22, vi. 33.)

LIV

The DUCHESS ELÉONORE DE BRUNSWICK ZELL to
L'ARCHIPRETRE DE DEY, in Saintonge.

Letter written by Her Highness to l'Archiprete.

MONSIEUR L'ARCHIPRETRE,—I replied about two months ago to the detailed account which you sent me, respecting the bad state in which Couppet was leaving my property at Olbreuze, and other places belonging to me; I fully explained my intentions on this subject. I considered it to my own interest and for the good of the property that someone should live in the Castle, and I asked your opinion on the matter. But as you have not answered that letter, although I have received two from you in the meanwhile, and I know your profession does not permit you to meddle in worldly affairs, I decided to let my property of Olbreuze to a man from Usseau, whom they tell me is rich and honourable; he will preserve the house, and as he will live in it, he will repair it little by little. I have begged M. de Marsay to let me know what rent I ought to ask; I also asked him to conclude my business with Couppet's widow. I trust Monsieur, you will aid him in this. I should like her treated

well. I hope you will always continue my friend, and believe me, I am very grateful for all the services which you have rendered me. E.

LUNEBOURG, April 9, 1709.

(Copy—Archives of the Royal Affairs of Hanover. Calenberger original archiv. D. 22. vi. 33.)

LV

L'ABBÉ TERNICIER, ARCHIPRETRE DE DEY, to the
DUCHESS ELÉONORE DE BRUNSWICK ZELL.

MADAME,—Three hours after I had posted my last letter to your Highness, I received through the Bishop of this Diocese and the Intendant of the Province, the King's orders to assemble the principal inhabitants of this place, to provide for the maintenance of the poor. As there are several of the latter in the parish of Usseau, in which the castle of Olbreuze is situated ; some of them came to speak to me in your Highness's interest, and as by the generous dispensation which you have already made of a fourth of the revenues of your property in favour of the poor

inhabitants, which is considerably more than the sum they could demand, it appeared to me necessary to communicate this information to these two gentlemen to avoid another tax, as it is not right that your Highness should be compelled to do any more. But on considering the matter, I did not see that there was anything prejudicial to your Highness to let affairs take their course; on the contrary, I thought that the information only showed your Highness's generosity, and would be edifying to those who knew it.

I understand that M. de Marsay, contrary to all my representations, and in opposition to what I have proposed to your Highness, has gone his own way. I should be sorry if any bad results ensue from his interference; awaiting your Highness's orders, which I hope will end the difference. I, in the meanwhile, have the honour to assure your Highness of my respectful attachment and esteem, Madame, from your very humble and obedient servant,

L. TERNICIER, ARCHIPRETRE DE DEY.

P.S. M. de Marsay is anxious to retire to Limousin, where he spends the greater part of

his time, and where he wishes to remain undisturbed.

DEY, May 20, 1709.

(Original—Archives of the Royal Affairs of Hanover. Cal. Or. Archiv. Des. 22, vi, 33.)

LVI

MDLLE. CHARLOTTE DE GAGEMONT to the DUCHESS
ELÉONORE DE BRUNSWICK ZELL.

MADAME,—It is with gratitude as deep as anyone can feel that I received the news of the great favours which your Serene Highness has bestowed on my brother and myself, and believe me I cannot sufficiently thank you, Madame, for confiding to us the administration of your property in Aunis. I trust you will understand that no one will execute your Highness's orders with more zeal and exactitude than we, since we shall neglect nothing that will ensure the preservation of the lands and the Castle. I immediately complied with your Serene Highness's wish, and entered upon my duties. I visited Monsieur l'Archiprêtre de Dey, who handed me

the keys and promised me in the most gracious manner to grant me all the assistance in his power to enable me to execute your Serene Highness's orders. By his advice, Madame, I left a care-taker at Olbreuze, as, unless one is on one's guard, the herds of cattle belonging to the inhabitants do much damage to the woods. I was unfortunately compelled to return here for about a fortnight to ascertain the state of the crops, since one must find out the condition of the land to have some check on the Curé d'Usseau's demands. I will leave no stone unturned, Madame, to prevent him from taking tithes which his predecessors have not taken, as it is very evident the latter would have insisted on having them if they were entitled to them. I shall have the honour of reporting everything to your Serene Highness, and I earnestly pray to Heaven to accord you prosperity and longevity. Madame, from your Serene Highness's very humble, submissive, and devoted servant,

CHARLOTTE PROVOST DE GAGEMONT.

GAGEMONT, July 8, 1709.

(Original—Ibidem.)

LVII

From the same to the same.

MADAME,—I cannot adequately express my gratitude to your Serene Highness for the kindness which you have manifested to my family and self. We were much gratified by the letter which you did me the honour of writing to me on the 6th of August, in which you sent us another proof of your liberality, viz., the 900 livres for Couppet's widow. My sister begs me to assure your Serene Highness that words cannot express her thankfulness to you for this assistance which was so urgently needed, and she assures you that, Madame, she prays for your Serene Highness's happiness and prosperity daily. I will not fail to remit to the person of the name of Sarazin the sum you sent, at the first opportunity. I shall also endeavour to obtain the sum of twenty pistoles from de Marsay, which he still holds of your Serene Highness, and I will give it to M. l'Archiprêtre de Dey, therefore, Madame, I will write to M. de Marsay at once (he has been at Limousin for the last three months), and tell him to refund the money, to enable me to execute your Serene

Highness's orders with all the speed possible. I have read, Madame, the letter which your Serene Highness sent me by M. de Lespronnière. The latter pretends that the Grand-Creuil was given him by a woman who had purchased it, but this we dispute. It is true that the meadow of Bellevüe is subject to a ground-rent to that property, and that it did not always belong to Olbreuze, and that there is a considerable portion of it uncultivated, in fact, Madame, it scarcely brings your Serene Highness in any revenue. If the building on it were repaired, it would be a different matter. They say to do this will cost 300 livres ; if you do not care to go to that expense, I think, Madame, you cannot do better than follow M. de Lespronnière's advice. He informed me, some time ago, that he had received orders from your Serene Highness to be allowed to cultivate the said meadow, as a compensation for the many losses he had sustained ; also that I was to give him up the particulars of the fief of Chapelle ; but I declined doing so until my brother's return, as he is much better informed on the subject than I. May I again be permitted to assure your Serene Highness that no one is more grateful for all the favours received, and has more

zeal in your service, than myself. I sincerely trust that I have given satisfaction, and with all the respect and gratitude of which I am capable, I am, Madame, your Serene Highness's very humble servant,

CHARLOTTE PROVOST DE GAGEMONT.

GAGEMONT, September 19, 1709.

(Original—Ibidem.)

XVIII

The PRINCESS SOPHIE-DOROTHÉE DE BRUNSWICK
LUNEBOURG to FREDERIC WILLIAM, PRINCE
ROYAL OF PRUSSIA.

(Not dated—supposed to be in the year 1709).

MONSIEUR,—I do not know how to express to your Royal Highness the joy that I experienced on receiving the letter, which you did me the honour of writing, I thank you for it with all my heart, and I entreat you to believe that if I had dared follow my inclination there would have been no need for you to have sent the information. My present unfortunate position must serve as an excuse to your Royal Highness. The kindness which you have shown me is my only consolation, and I deserve it, Monsieur, since no one honours

and loves your Royal Highness more ardently than myself. I should die content if I could have the happiness of personally assuring you of this, as I have always longed to see the Prince, who, for obvious reasons, is so dear to me. I beg from your Royal Highness the continuation of your friendship which is so inexpressibly precious to me; all the actions of my life will prove my gratitude for your kind sympathy.—I am, Monsieur, with much respect, your Royal Highness's very obedient servant and devoted mother,

SOPHIE-DOROTHÉE.

(Original—Archives of the Secret Prussian Affairs at Berlin—Autographen Sammlung. F. 17, T.)

LIX

FREDERICK I, KING OF PRUSSIA, to the DUCHESS
ELÉONORE DE BRUNSWICK ZELL.

MY VERY DEAR COUSIN,—I am much obliged to your Highness for your good wishes for the New Year, and also for all your assurances of affection. I wish to convince you that I entirely

reciprocate them.—I am, your Highness's affectionate cousin,
FREDERICK.

BERLIN, January 24, 1712.
To the DOWAGER DUCHESS DE ZELL.

(Copy preserved—Archives of the Prussian State Affairs at Berlin. Manuscript Sammlung von Briefen, etc., t. III. fol. 401.)

LX

FREDERICK I, KING OF PRUSSIA, to the DUCHESS
ELÉONORE DE BRUNSWICK ZELL.

MY COUSIN,—Knowing the interest which your Highness takes in the Royal House, I hasten to inform you of my daughter, the Princess Royal's safe confinement of a son, (*) who was born on Sunday, the 24th inst. The Princess Royal is as well as she was when the Princess Royal of Prussia was . . . (+) . . . and in good health.—I am always etc.—

BERLIN, January 26, 1712.
To the DOWAGER DUCHESS DE ZELL.

(Copy—Ibidem. fol. 400.)

* This prince whom he mentions, afterwards became Frederick The Great.

† Two or three words are illegible in the copy.

LXI

THE DUKE AUGUSTE-GUILLAUME DE BRUNSWICK TO
THE DUCHESS ELÉONORE DE BRUNSWICK ZELL.

WOLFENBUTTEL, July 18, 1713.

MADAME,—Having been informed that your Highness is resolved to give ten thousand crowns to the bailage of Campen, I beg to assure you of my gratitude for this proof of your kindness, and to say that I shall do all in my power to preserve your Highness's friendship which you so generously accorded to my father. Madame, from your Highness's very humble and very obedient servant,

AUGUSTE-GUILLAUME.*

(Original—Archives of Hanover.)

LXII

THE DUKE ERNEST-FERDINAND DE BRUNSWICK TO
THE DUCHESS ELÉONORE DE BRUNSWICK ZELL.

MADAME,—I am very happy to have an opportunity of assuring your Highness of my humble respect, and of my obedience to your

* Auguste-Guillaume de Brunswick Wolfenbuttel. Born in 1662, died 1731, son and successor of Antoine-Ulric.

orders. You will understand by this that I will sign with pleasure the obligation for ten thousand crowns that has just been shown me. I trust your Highness is persuaded that I have not forgotten your many kindnesses, and that I am always grateful for the same. Madame, from your Highness's very humble and very obedient servant,

ERNEST-FERDINAND.

BRUNSWICK, July 18, 1713.

(Original—Ibidem.)

LXIII

THE DUCHESS ELÉONORE DE BRUNSWICK ZELL TO
M. DE LA TAILLÉE.

LUNEBOURG, March 28, 1716.

MY COUSIN,—You are the first person to inform me of a report that you have not behaved kindly to your mother; no one has dared to mention the subject to me, knowing well that I have too good an opinion of you to believe such an accusation. I am very sorry that your affairs are in a bad state, and fear I cannot be of much assistance to you, as I have divided the revenue of my property of Olbreuze into five parts, out of

which M. de Gagemont has one, his sister one, Madame de Vau Valandré one, and the poor inhabitants another, I retained the fifth portion to defray the expenses of the repairs of the house. If it would be any accommodation, I will give it to you willingly, in which case, each one of you must contribute a sufficient sum to pay for the repairs, as I do not wish the house to be neglected. I have a great number of refugees in Holland whom I support entirely. Amongst them is your aunt, Mdle. Martel. There are also several persons dependent on me here, so you will understand, my cousin, that all this prevents me assisting my relatives in France, except through my property of Olbreuze. I send my compliments to Mdme. de la Taillée, and I am yours sincerely,

ELÉONORE,

Duchess de Brunswick and Lunebourg.

(From a copy, Archives of Hanover. Calen-
berger. Original—Archiv. Des. 22. vi. 41.)

LXIV

THE DUCHESS ELÉONORE DE BRUNSWICK ZELL TO
M. DE GAGEMONT.

ZELL, October 26, 1717.

MY COUSIN,—I wrote to you some time ago

and told you how I wished the revenue of my property of Olbreuze divided, viz., one portion to my relative Madame de Vaux Montalembert, one to my relative, M. de la Taillée, and the two remaining portions to yourself and your sister. In the meanwhile I have heard that Mdme. de Vaux has died, so I desire that her son, Alexis de Montalembert, should succeed to his mother's portion, it is not to be shared with his brothers. You will, I hope, see that this is done, and let him have exactly the same amount as his mother had during her lifetime. Each one of you will, I trust, give what you can afford to the poor. This is all I have to say to you, my cousin. —Believe me always very affectionately yours,

ELÉONORE,

Duchess de Brunswick and Lunebourg.

(and on the other side was written,)

To M. DE GAGEMONT, at Olbreuze.

(From a copy, Archives of the Royal Affairs of Hanover. Cal. Orig. Arch. Des. 22, vi, 41.)

LXV

M. ALEXIS DE MONTALEMBERT DE VAUX to the
DUCHESS ELÉONORE DE BRUNSWICK ZELL.

MADAME,—Your Serene Highness knows no

doubt that the New Year is a privileged time, for this reason I trust that you will excuse the liberty I have taken in writing to wish you all the prosperity and happiness which you could desire. I entreat your Serene Highness to accord me the grace of believing that I earnestly pray to Heaven to bless your Serene Highness for all the benefits which you have conferred on me. Will your Serene Highness pardon the liberty I take in informing you of my marriage. I have long been attached to my wife. She is a lady of high reputation, and although she is not rich in worldly goods, she possesses many virtues which I thoroughly appreciate.—I have the honour to be, Madame, your very respectful and obedient servant,

MONTALEMBERT.

VERDUN, January, 1, 1718.

(Original—Ibidem.)

LXVI

THE DUCHESS ELÉONORE DE BRUNSWICK ZELL TO
FREDERICK WILLIAM I, KING OF PRUSSIA.

SIRE,—I give myself the honour of writing this to your Majesty to testify my joy that you have passed happily the year which is about to

close, and I ardently pray to Heaven that the coming year will be bright also, and be followed by many more as full of prosperity as your Majesty could desire. I trust your Majesty will honour me with a continuation of your friendship and esteem, and I assure you, Sire, that I am your very respectful and humble servant,

ELÉONORE.

ZELL, December 22, 1718.

(Original—Archives of the Royal House of Prussia at Berlin.)

LXVII

FREDERICK WILLIAM I, KING OF PRUSSIA, to the
DUCHESS ELÉONORE DE BRUNSWICK DE ZELL.

Not dated, (year 1708-1709.)

MADAME, my aunt and mother,—I was extremely pleased to receive your letter, in which you tell me that you pray to Heaven for my happiness and prosperity. I feel still more obliged since I know very well that your affectionate heart is full of love for me,—may heaven grant you all manner of felicity, and I hope I shall be able to send you my good wishes for several years to come, and

assure you of the respect with which I sign myself, Madame, my aunt and mother, your very affectionate cousin and son, etc.,

(Copy preserved in the Archives of the Royal House of Prussia at Berlin.)

LXVIII

M. DE LA TAILLÉE to the PRINCESS SOPHIE-DOROTHÉE
DE BRUNSWICK LUNEBOURG.

MADAME,—With the deepest respect and gratitude I have received the benefits which your Serene Highness has conferred on me by permitting me to retain the use of the revenue of your property at Olbreuze ; I entreat, Madame, to be allowed the honour of respectfully assuring you that I thank you a thousand times for your generous action. I have returned the declaration to M. de Gagemont which he requested, in compliance with your Serene Highness's orders ; I will also punctually execute all those which it will please your Highness to honour me with respecting the majority of the papers of this property, and others, which I hold of yours. Her Serene Highness, the deceased Duchess de Zell, consigned them to my care after my father's death,

and she honoured him by entrusting the care of her affairs in this country to his keeping. I have dared to hope, Madame, that your Serene Highness will forgive the liberty which I take in asking a continuation of the above favours to myself and family, which is very considerable. We will not cease offering up prayers to Heaven for the prosperity of your Serene Highness.—I have the honour to be, Madame, your Serene Highness's very humble, very obedient, and very submissive servant,

LA TAILLÉE

February 20, 1723.

(Original—Archives of the Royal Affairs of Hanover. Cal. Or Archiv. Des. 22, vi, 45.)

LXIV

SOPHIE-DOROTHÉE to CHAPPUZEAU

AHLDEN, April 4, 1723.

I reply to three of your letters, and will commence with that of March 13th.

As you, yourself, M. de Chappuzeau sent me what the Count de Bothmer wrote to you and the Bailiff Ludeman, I naturally thought you would retain a copy, since it was necessary for you to do so, that is why I return it you.

T

With regard to the second, of the 24th inst, I desire M. de la Taillée to keep the papers which he held during my mother's lifetime, supposing there is nothing amongst them which M. de Gagemont requires; but it seems to me necessary that he should send me a formal specification. I trust you will answer the letter which he wrote to you in common with the Bailiff Ludeman, and that you will thank him graciously for the message it contained for me.

S. D.

(Original—Archives of the Royal affairs of Hanover. Cal. Or. Arch. Des. 22 vi., 45).

*ALPHABETICAL LIST OF THE
SURNAMES*

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF THE SURNAMES

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